

# Elementary English

MAY, 1951

SOURCES OF CURRICULUM  
MATERIALS



READABILITY OF CHILDREN'S  
BOOKS



EMOTION AND READING  
RETARDATION



DEVELOPING SPELLING  
ABILITY



WRITING FOR EMOTIONAL  
RELEASE



DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS

# Elementary ENGLISH

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MAY, 1951

- 257 Curriculum Materials in Language  
HUGH B. WOOD  
AND  
HOWARD IMPECOVEN
- 263 Difficulty of Juvenile Books  
DAVID H. RUSSELL  
AND  
ANNE F. MERRILL
- 269 "It Was Thundering"  
MARY E. BOWER
- 271 Implications in Emotionally Caused  
Reading Retardation  
NORMAN YOUNG  
AND  
EUGENE L. GAIER
- 276 Substitutes for the Comic Books II  
CONSTANCE CARR
- 286 Developing Spelling Ability  
JANE WILCOX COOPER
- 290 Development of Thinking and of Concepts  
HELEN BACHMANN KNIPP
- 298 Look and Listen
- 301 The Educational Scene
- 305 Editorial
- 306 Review and Criticism

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# ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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MAY, 1951

No. 5

## Curriculum Materials in the Language Arts

HUGH B. WOOD<sup>2</sup> AND HOWARD IMPECOVEN<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Many teachers, supervisors, and administrators frequently ask, "Where can I find a good course of study in Language Arts?" or "What are other schools doing in Language Arts?" This bibliography lists some of the more recent materials that have been prepared for specific school situations. Some offer definite suggestions; others are quite general. Some represent fusion programs; others are more conventional subject programs. Among them there should be some that will be helpful to all teachers.

No claim is made for comprehensiveness. The following criteria guided the selection of these materials:<sup>2</sup>

1. For the most part, only materials prepared by teachers and administrators and issued by school systems have been included.
2. Evidence of conscientious workmanship and effort (with a limited amount of the "scissors and paste" technique) was considered more important than adherence to a specific philosophy or type; an effort was made to include a *cross-section* of good materials of all types and points of view.
3. Most of the materials included have been prepared since 1945.

4. All of the materials have been recommended by some professional publication or by a local or state administrator or a curriculum specialist.

5. The selection is limited somewhat by availability inasmuch as some school systems are not willing to release their materials to curriculum laboratories and others outside their own systems.

6. Although a rather extensive search of the literature was made, including the *Education Index* and other bibliographies, undoubtedly many excellent materials were not uncovered and thus have not been listed.

The compilers plan to revise this bibliography from time to time. They would appreciate suggestions and information relative to errors and omissions. All annotated items were personally examined by the compilers; others are included on the basis of strong recommendations.

### *Composition and General Language Arts*

Battle Creek, Michigan. *Tentative Guide for*

<sup>1</sup>Professor of Education and graduate assistant, respectively, at the University of Oregon.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Wood selected the materials and organized the bibliographies; Mr. Impecoven prepared the bibliographic entries and the annotations.

*Teaching Language Arts Skills, Kindergarten Through Grade 12.* Battle Creek Public Schools, 1950. 25 p.

Emphasizes that research on functional grammar—simple, basic grammar that is used in improving expression—shows that grammar should be taught when needed by the pupil and not artificially introduced.

Cheyenne, Wyoming. *A Guide for the Program of Instruction in the Language Arts.* State Department of Education, 1945. 180 p.

Discusses a flexible sequence of language arts for the elementary grades of the State of Wyoming. Contents are consistent with the assumption that language not only functions in the home and community as well as the school, but is also a powerful tool in the hands of Democracy.

Hillsborough County, Florida. *English as Experience.* Tampa: Hillsborough County Board of Public Instruction, 1947. 102 p.

Provides for grades 7-12 a dynamic program in English and gives many units of work complete with activities, instructional materials, and desired outcomes. The units are simply constructed; they are succinct and concise.

Houston, Texas. *Language Handbook for Elementary Grades.* Houston Public Schools, 1951. 151 p.

Designed to guide teachers in planning activities and directing drill exercises through which their pupils can acquire ever-increasing efficiency in thinking, speaking, and writing. Provides for the development in each child of the appreciation of important moral and spiritual values to such an extent that they arouse in him a deep desire to build worthy ideals, good study habits, and right attitudes.

Houston, Texas. *Manual of Language Forms and Usages Approved for Use in the Houston Public Schools.* Houston Public Schools, 1951. 44 p.

Believes that much time and effort can be conserved by enabling every student to observe consistently the same forms as he moves from classroom to classroom or from grade to grade so that he does not have to waste valuable time in deciding which form he should use in each different teacher's class.

Kansas City, Missouri. *Experiences In The Language Arts* (Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior years—3 volumes). Kansas City Public Schools, 1950. 75 p., 61 p., 77 p.

Contains modifications over a previously used course to ensure encouragement of greater attention to the teaching of language structure and mechanics. Contents are a brief outline of suggestions for English which teachers can easily adapt to the specific needs and interests of their particular classes.

Lincoln, Nebraska. *English for Nebraska High Schools.* State Department of Public Instruction, 1949. 123 p.

Proposes to give assistance to those directly responsible for the organization and conduct of the English program. Suggestions contained concern themselves with the basic English program for all pupils rather than with specialized courses in English such as public speaking, journalism, dramatics, and business English designed to meet the special needs of a few pupils. Takes a middle course between the traditional program and the integrative aspects of more advanced programs.

Lincoln, Nebraska. *Language Arts for Nebraska Elementary School Children.* State Department of Public Instruction, 1948. 54 p.

Includes specific attainments for language, handwriting, and spelling (reading in another bulletin), and many of the attainments in the bulletin concern the development of proper attitudes rather than simply skills and knowledges.



Long Beach, California. *Guide To The Teaching of Language Arts in the Elementary School*.

Long Beach Public Schools, 1950. 135 p.

Includes many practical suggestions not only for oral and written expression but also for work-study skills. An unusual feature is the inclusion of examples of methods in the guide itself.

Los Angeles, California. *Instructional Guide to Mechanics of English for Secondary Schools*.

Los Angeles Public Schools, 1950. 33 p.

Outlines the general scope of instruction in the mechanics of English expression, presented in the schools as part of the broader language program. An attempt has been made to provide a concise guide which teachers all over the city may modify for their daily use.

Madison, Wisconsin. *Abilities and Skills in Oral and Written Communication*. State Superintendent of Instruction, October, 1948. 40 p.

Summarizes a sequential attack from kindergarten through senior high school of appropriate abilities and skills for effective use of language.

Mishawaka, Indiana. *Course of Study in English*. Mishawaka Public Schools, 1949. 60 p.

Adapts subject matter and methods to the needs and abilities of all the students—raises the comprehension and expression levels of the "followers" yet also encourages and develops potential leaders who can think for and express themselves. Allows the study of the English language arts and literature in close correlation and integration with all other school and life experiences.

Newark, New Jersey. *Language Arts Program Grades 4, 5, 6*. Newark Public Schools, 1945. 104 p.

Hopes to promote the child's optimum development in the language arts by placing greater emphasis on continuous growth rather than on grade attainments.

Expectancies are listed to serve as guideposts to the teacher so that in the process of appraisal, evidences of progress, consistent with individual capacity, shall be discernible by both teacher and pupil.

Omaha, Nebraska. *A Tentative Outline for English, Grades Nine-Twelve*. Omaha Public Schools, 1950. 16 p.

Suggests a very brief outline-form of English study for grades nine through twelve; only skeleton outlining is used. Keyed to particular texts used in the Omaha schools.

Pinellas County, Florida. *Child Growth through the Language Arts*. Clearwater: County Public Schools, 1946. 210 p.

Sets up units of growth through reading, literature, composition, spelling, handwriting, and through language arts in content fields. Places the emphasis on *why* it is necessary to do certain things in the language arts to further the growth of children rather than *how* to do it.

Providence, Rhode Island. *English for Grades 10, 11, 12*. Providence Public Schools, 1950. 184 p.

Sacramento, California. *Course of Study in Senior Composition A—Senior High Schools*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1950. 12 p.

Designed for the superior students who plan to enter four year degree-granting institutions immediately following graduation from high school. The course deals with the various phases of expository writing. It includes the study of words, the mechanics of writing, sentence structure, the development of the paragraph, and the organization of the essay as a whole.

Sacramento, California. *Course of Study in Senior Composition B—Senior High Schools*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1950. 12 p.

Describes a course open to students who

are not taking university preparatory work but who wish to continue their studies at junior college or to have additional work in English preparatory to entering a vocation. The basic aim of the course is to prepare the student to express himself clearly and effectively in speaking and writing.

Salem, Oregon. *Language Arts* (Tentative Manual, State of Oregon High Schools). State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1945. 138 p. Mimeographed.

Studies the thoughts, attitudes, and appreciations considered essential to the inter-related skills or activities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

St. Paul, Minnesota. *Course of Study in High School Remedial English*. St. Paul Public Schools, 1946. 86 p.

Suggests remedial — rather than punitive — work of the reading-communication type rather than the coach-drill type for ninth and tenth grades; materials included are selected for variety, attractiveness, appropriateness, and intrinsic value.

Tulare County, California. *Language Arts Guide*. Visalia: Tulare County Board of Education. 1949. 132 p.

Developed around four aspects of language experience: listening, speaking, reading, and writing for kindergarten through grade fourteen. A resource book offering suggested methods, techniques, devices, materials, and activities.

### *English-Social Studies Fusion Courses*

Denver, Colorado. *Social Living Concepts, Problems and Units*. Denver Public Schools, 1950.

Pasadena, California. *English - Social Studies Courses for the Seventh Grade; —Eighth Grade; —Tenth Grade*. Pasadena City Schools, 1947. 79p.; 70p.; 87p.

Shows methods that stimulate the initiative and freedom of the teacher, and the

aids and references that constitute a needed relief from much of the drudgery that often hampers the preparation essential for unified teaching.

Talbot County, Maryland. *English - Social Studies Program in the Junior High School*. Easton: Talbot County Public Schools, 1950. 171 p.

Considers four major goals: (a) to identify those problems that are significant and meaningful to junior high school pupils; (b) to group the problems into areas for unit construction; (c) to allocate those unit areas according to grade level; (d) to work out one unit for each grade level in the junior high school.

Webster Groves, Missouri. *Aids to Teaching Language Arts-Social Studies in the Elementary School*. Webster Groves Public Schools, 1948. Unpaged.

Divides this area of study into three parts: Part I—Kindergarten-Grades I and II, Part II—Grades III and IV, Part III—Grades V and VI, and attempts to bring together some of the major aids for teachers in the language arts-social studies fields. It serves briefly to orient the plan of the curriculum and the relationship of skills, unit content, and allied activities. Units are suggested; some are outlined in full, and some merely suggest valuable references for development.

Webster Groves, Missouri. *The Unit of Work; Its Origin and Operation With Application to the Language Arts-Social Studies Core Program*. Webster Groves Public Schools, 1947. 31 p.

Conceives of the unit as a method of organizing materials on wide levels of reading difficulty, focusing these readings on a common topic, theme, or unit and thus providing for individual differences within a heterogeneous group. This reverses the usual procedure in unit construction of beginning with the idea of

subject matter to be covered and proceeding toward the mastery of subject matter.

### *Reading and Literature*

Cedar Falls, Iowa. *Guiding Primary Children with Emphasis on Pre-Reading Activities*. Iowa State Teachers College, 1948. 36 p.

Provides the teacher with a suggested systematic pre-reading program for the five year old. Designed to emphasize the several phases of readiness for reading, and is an attempt to provide especially for the development of that phase of reading readiness which is defined as social readiness. Also presents a detailed description of a suggested instructional program for the social studies in the first three years of a typical rural school.

Denver, Colorado. *Toward Better Reading*. Denver Public Schools, 1945. 88 p.

An instructional guide prepared to meet three objectives: first, to state the fundamental principles of an adequate reading program; second, to discuss the reading problems of the junior and senior high schools; and third, to present and illustrate some techniques and devices which may be used in guiding reading in all fields of study.

Lincoln, Nebraska. *Reading for Nebraska Elementary School Children*. State Department of Public Instruction, 1947. 100 p.

Organizes the program into five parts for each grade: (a) specific reading goals for the grade, (b) suiting the reading to the individual child, (c) harmonizing the reading with the child's interests, (d) teaching procedures and methods, and (e) suggestions for evaluating the reading program at the close of the year.

Long Beach, California. *Related Reading Experiences*. Long Beach Public Schools, 1950. 57 p.

Designed to suggest worthwhile and educational related reading experiences for

children who may not be reading with the particular group which is working directly with the teacher.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin. *Literature in the Language Arts Program*. Milwaukee Public Schools, 1947. 22 p.

Organizes the purposes of literature in the language arts around reading environment, motivation, appraisal, selection of materials, suggestions for determining pupils' interests, and bibliography for teachers. For elementary grades only.

Mishawaka, Indiana. *Reading Course of Study for Grades 1 to 6*. Mishawaka Public Schools, 1949. 69 p.

Provides supplementary materials and gives aids and suggestions in meeting the wide range of problems faced by the teacher of reading. Aims to encourage initiative in teaching, and to reduce the work of the teacher by providing in a readily accessible form suggestions, information, references, and aids, and thus free more teacher time for the problems of the individual pupils.

Omaha, Nebraska. *Developing Readiness for Beginning Reading*. Omaha Public Schools, 1948. 19 p.

Presents a program of varied experiences consistent with the child's development, and organizes the child's pre-reading needs so that he is led gradually and successfully toward reading. Ways of evaluating individual progress are indicated, and an excellent bibliography included.

Pasadena, California. *Reading Activities Used in the Pasadena Elementary Schools*. Pasadena Public Schools, 1947. 55 p.

Presents with brief introductions, specific practices which have been used successfully in reading and in experiences closely related to it. The suggested methods and activities were gathered within the school system and were considered valuable by a committee of teachers.

Pasadena, California. *Some Questions and Answers about Reading in the Elementary School Program*. Pasadena City Schools, 1947. 29 p.

Gathers together 14 questions usually asked reading consultants, and gives carefully outlined answers and suggestions, as well as supplemental readings, for each question.

Sacramento, California. *Course of Study in English Literature Survey*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1949. 15 p.

Contains, like all survey courses, work of a comprehensive nature, and considerably more material has been included than any class can expect to cover in one term. However, most of the significant authors and literature of old England have been included, giving teachers a wide choice of materials for classroom use in the senior high school.

Sacramento, California. *Guide for Teaching Phonics*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1948. 69 p.

Maintains that phonics is an aid in the teaching of reading and not as a system of teaching reading. Encourages such phonetic skills as: (a) having children find the likenesses and differences in words; (b) finding the root words; (c) finding the words in compound words; and (d) building words by making new words from known ones.

Tulsa, Oklahoma. *Promoting Growth in Reading, A Teacher's Guide for Use in Secondary Schools*. Tulsa Public Schools, 1948. 190 p.

Defines the general nature of the reading problem in the Tulsa high schools by showing the present reading status, the needs for further improvement, the concepts of reading and reading instruction which are basic to a well-rounded program of reading in high school, and the nature and scope of the recommended program of reading for high school pupils.

Washington, D. C. *Reading Curriculum Bul-*

*letin*. Washington Public Schools, 1950. 97 p.

Recognizes the fact that there is no single method certain to achieve desired results in reading; draws upon all the known ways by which people learn to read, and offers practical suggestions to teachers as to how, when, and under what circumstances to direct readiness, to recognize it, to use phonics, to develop visual and auditory discrimination, and to arrive at meanings.

### Library

Omaha, Nebraska. *A Library Program for Elementary Schools*. Omaha Public Schools, 1948. 23 p.

Provides an outline to aid teachers and librarians in training children to use the elementary school library; seeks to create a love of reading, to enrich the work of the classroom by integrating the library with the school, to give the child an understanding of the use of books as tools, and to aid the child in building good citizenship through the use of the library.

Omaha, Nebraska. *Manual of Library Procedures for Elementary Schools*. Omaha Public Schools, 1950. 20 p.

Develops material relating to the maintenance and development of effective elementary school library service; designed to itemize and clarify routine practices for the librarian.

Sacramento, California. *Manual and Course of Study for Elementary School Libraries*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1950. 87 p.

Defines these objectives as worthwhile goals: (a) to supply children a wide field of reading materials and to afford them constant opportunity for recreational reading; (b) to supply children and teachers an adequate source of reference materials related to the elementary curriculum; (c) to provide definite instruction for all elementary school children in the efficient use of books and libraries.

(Continued on Page 300)



# Children's Librarians Rate the Difficulty of Well-Known Juvenile Books

DAVID H. RUSSELL AND ANNE F. MERRILL<sup>1</sup>

Parents, teachers, and children's librarians are always on the alert for books suitable for a particular child or group of children. Usually the first two questions they, or the children themselves, ask are, "What is the book about?" and "How hard is it?" For many years, studies of children's reading interests have given some clues to what is attractive content at various age levels. More recently objective attempts have been made to measure the difficulty of books. The present study is concerned with the difficulty factor. It is an investigation of the way children's librarians rate the difficulty of juvenile books and the relation of some of their ratings to six more objective measures of readability.

## *Procedures*

As the first step in the study the authors selected sixty titles which occurred on at least three of six lists of books recommended for children (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 13). These titles are given alphabetically by author in Table I. The librarians were asked to state the one best grade level to which each of the books was suited. If they felt a book was equally good in two successive grades, they were asked to mention the two grades. As an example they were told that a book rated for the fourth grade would be placed half way through that level at grade 4.5, and that a book placed in both the fifth and sixth grades would mean an average of 5.5 and 6.5 or a grade placement of 6.0. Sixty-three librarians out of one hundred responded to the request for ratings. A few did not rate one or two books so that the judgments in the figures of Table I usually ranged between sixty and sixty-three ratings. The librarians worked in ten

different states with a majority of the group in California.

The more objective placement of the grade level of twelve of these books was obtained by the application of six different readability formulas to the books. These were the Dale-Chall (4), the Flesch (6), the Lewerenz (8), the Lorge (9, 10), the Winnetka (12), and the Yoakam (14) formulas. With the exception of the Winnetka and Lewerenz Scales, these formulas were not originally devised on the basis of children's voluntary reading such as would occur with many of the books listed. Rather they were developed in terms of reading exercises, textbook and magazine materials. Each formula differs from the others, but in general they tend to rate difficulty in terms of percentage of hard words in the samples counted, length of sentence, sentence structure and, in the case of the Flesch formula, the "human interest" factors in the material. They do not measure such factors as attractiveness of format, interest of the content of the material to children at different age levels, and conceptual difficulty of the materials. The results of applying the formulas to certain juvenile books are discussed more completely elsewhere (11) with some implications for the validity of the various formulas.

## *Results*

Table I gives the mean, the standard deviation, and the range of approximately sixty librarians' ratings of the sixty well-known children's books. The results indicate that, in general, children's librarians do not agree closely

<sup>1</sup>University of California, Berkeley.



with one another in rating the difficulty of juvenile books. Of the sixty books rated none is placed at the same grade level by all the librarians, only three are placed at two adjacent grade levels and twenty-one are placed at three consecutive grade levels. The most usual range in judgment is from three to four grade levels, and eight books are rated at least five grade levels apart.

This spread, however, should not be interpreted as complete disagreement among the children's librarians. A few of the respondents marked books as ones to be read to children at lower grade levels. Also, the results may indicate that some children in certain parts of the country or at particular socio-economic levels find a book both interesting and easy while other children, in different environments, find it dull and hard. They suggest, as well, that a librarian's work with children may have the effect of producing a judgment of books on an individual book-to-child basis so that the usual standards of grade placement do not apply. They suggest, finally, that many different factors probably go into the suitability and difficulty of children's books for various age or grade levels. Table I indicates, however, that little agreement about difficulty level can be expected from a group of children's librarians. It calls into question the procedures of some publishers of juveniles and of book-lists in determining the level of a book by a few so-called expert opinions.

Although individual librarian's ratings differ greatly, the average of some sixty judgments approximates very closely the more objective ratings of the readability formulas. Table II indicates that, for eleven books, the average librarian's rating is within one grade of the average of the formulas on eleven of the books. (The twelfth case suggests that one formula only rates Enright's *The Saturdays* much too high and therefore that the average readability score of this book is too high.) Within this

narrow range of difference the librarians rate the books as harder in two cases, about the same in four cases, and a little easier in six cases. There seems to be a slight tendency for the librarians to rate the books as easier than the formulas place them, but the chief conclusion must be reached that the combined ratings closely approximate the results of the combined readability formulas.

Table II indicates further that the grade placement system used in the *Children's Catalog*, with a typical spread of three or four grade-levels, usually covers the placement determined by the average of the six readability formulas and also the average of the sixty-three librarians' ratings. However, the middle point of the *Children's Catalog* placement is below that of the mean formula rating on eight of the twelve books. The *Children's Catalog* placement accordingly gives the impression that the books are somewhat easier than the readability formulas state they are.

Table II also gives the average deviations of the librarians' ratings from the mean readability score of the six formulas for each of the twelve books. These deviations are calculated from the original ratings. They indicate that the librarians usually deviate from a half-grade to a grade away from the mean score obtained from the readability formulas. This must be taken as a minimum figure because inspection of Table I reveals that the twelve books here listed were ones on which the librarians agreed most closely among themselves. It seems safe to suggest that, on the average, the librarians deviate at least one grade level from the average of the readability formulas in their estimates of the difficulty level of these children's books. This result does not necessarily mean that the librarians are wrong. Once again, it suggests that it is probably dangerous for a publisher or compiler of a children's book-list to rate the grade level of a juvenile book on the basis of a few opinions about its difficulty.

TABLE I  
*The Grade Placement of Sixty Juvenile Books*  
*By Sixty-Three Children's Librarians*

|   | Mean | Standard Deviation | Range    |
|---|------|--------------------|----------|
| 1. Alcott, L. M.<br>Little Women                                  | 6.91 | .72                | 5.5-8.5  |
| 2. Andersen, H. C. (Lucas)<br>Fairy Tales                         | 5.82 | .54                | 4.5-7.5  |
| 3. Atwater, R. T. & F. H.<br>Mr. Popper's Penguins                | 5.01 | .55                | 4 - 6.5  |
| 4. Beskow, E.<br>Pelle's New Suit                                 | 3.02 | .89                | 0.5-4.5  |
| 5. Bishop, C. H.<br>Five Chinese Brothers                         | 3.44 | .84                | 0.5-5.0  |
| 6. Brink, C.<br>Caddie Woodlawn                                   | 6.36 | .66                | 4.5-7.5  |
| 7. Brooke, L. L.<br>Johnny Crow's Garden                          | 2.34 | .77                | 0.5-5.0  |
| 8. Burton, V. L.<br>Little House                                  | 3.22 | .81                | 0.5-4.5  |
| 9. Carrick, V.<br>Picture Tales from the Russian                  | 4.00 | .79                | 2.0-6.0  |
| 10. Carroll, L.<br>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland               | 5.82 | .78                | 4.5-8.5  |
| 11. Church, A. J.<br>Ilaid for Boys & Girls                       | 7.32 | .88                | 5.5-12.5 |
| 12. Clark, A. N.<br>In My Mother's House                          | 3.88 | .80                | 2.0-5.5  |
| 13. Clark, M. E. & Quigley, M. C.<br>Poppy Seed Cakes             | 3.86 | .67                | 2.5-5.5  |
| 14. Clemens, S. L.<br>Adventures of Tom Sawyer                    | 6.78 | .79                | 5.5-8.5  |
| 15. Colum, P. (ed)<br>Arabian Nights                              | 6.53 | .86                | 3.9-9.0  |
| 16. DeAngeli, M.<br>Henner's Lydia                                | 4.99 | .52                | 4.0-6.5  |
| 17. Defoe, D.<br>Robinson Crusoe                                  | 6.77 | .69                | 5.5-8.5  |
| 18. Edmonds, W. D.<br>Matchlock Gun                               | 5.64 | .73                | 4.5-7.5  |
| 19. Enright, E.<br>The Saturdays                                  | 6.0  | .62                | 5.0-7.5  |
| 20. Field, R. L.<br>Hitty, Her First Hundred Years                | 6.36 | .79                | 4.5-8.5  |
| 21. Flack, M.<br>Story about Ping                                 | 3.04 | .78                | 0.5-4.5  |
| 22. Flack, M.<br>Tim Tadpole and the Great Bullfrog               | 2.97 | .80                | 0.5-4.5  |
| 23. Gall, A. & Crew, F. H.<br>Ringtail                            | 4.93 | .53                | 4.0-6.5  |
| 24. Gates, D.<br>Blue Willow                                      | 6.11 | .54                | 5.5-7.5  |
| 25. Grahame, K.<br>The Wind in the Willows                        | 6.26 | 1.16               | 0.5-8.5  |
| 26. Gramatky, H.<br>Little Toot                                   | 3.12 | .83                | 0.5-4.5  |
| 27. Grimm, J. L. K. & W. K.<br>Household Stories                  | 5.28 | .56                | 4.0-7.0  |
| 28. Hale, L. P.<br>Peterkin Papers                                | 6.23 | .71                | 4.5-8.5  |
| 29. Hartman, G.<br>These United States and<br>How They Came to Be | 7.33 | .75                | 5.5-8.5  |
| 30. Hawthorne, N.<br>Wonderbook and Tanglewood Tales              | 6.53 | .80                | 4.5-8.5  |

TABLE I — Continued

|                          | Mean | Standard Deviation | Range    |
|--------------------------|------|--------------------|----------|
| 31. Kipling, R.          | 6.38 | .65                | 5.0- 8.5 |
| 32. Knight, E. M.        | 6.75 | .79                | 5.5- 9.5 |
| 33. James, W.            | 7.14 | .86                | 5.5- 8.5 |
| 34. Lattimore, E. F.     | 4.32 | .55                | 3.0- 5.5 |
| 35. Lefevre, F.          | 3.07 | .70                | 1.5- 4.5 |
| 36. Lenski, L.           | 2.56 | .80                | 0.5- 4.0 |
| 37. Lent, H. B.          | 4.70 | .83                | 2.5- 6.5 |
| 38. Lewis, E. F.         | 7.40 | .68                | 6.0- 9.5 |
| 39. Lofting, H.          | 5.39 | .60                | 4.5- 6.5 |
| 40. Malory, T.           | 7.26 | .93                | 5.0- 9.5 |
| 41. McCloskey, R.        | 3.12 | .53                | 0.5- 5.0 |
| 42. Milne, A. A.         | 4.39 | .91                | 0.5- 5.5 |
| 43. Mukerji, D. J.       | 6.40 | .67                | 4.5- 8.5 |
| 44. Mulock, D.           | 5.17 | .66                | 3.5- 6.5 |
| 45. Petersham, M. and M. | 3.99 | .61                | 2.5- 5.5 |
| 46. Pyle, H.             | 6.73 | .72                | 5.0- 8.5 |
| 47. Potter, B.           | 2.81 | .95                | 0.5- 4.5 |
| 48. Reed, W. M.          | 6.74 | .80                | 5.0-10.5 |
| 49. Sandburg, C.         | 5.78 | .69                | 4.5- 8.0 |
| 50. Sereby, K.           | 6.82 | .84                | 4.5- 8.5 |
| 51. Sharpe, S. G.        | 3.80 | .92                | 1.5- 5.5 |
| 52. Sperry, A.           | 6.30 | .70                | 5.0- 8.0 |
| 53. Spyri, J.            | 5.68 | .59                | 4.5- 7.0 |
| 54. Stevenson, R. L.     | 7.67 | .80                | 6.5-10.5 |
| 55. Stevenson, R. L.     | 7.40 | .72                | 5.5- 8.5 |
| 56. Stong, P. D.         | 5.09 | .48                | 4.5- 6.0 |
| 57. Thorne-Thomsen, G.   | 4.94 | .62                | 3.5- 6.5 |
| 58. Travers, P. L.       | 5.64 | .52                | 4.0- 6.5 |
| 59. Wilder, L. I.        | 6.06 | .70                | 4.5- 8.0 |
| 60. Wyss, J. D.          | 6.67 | .84                | 5.0- 8.5 |

TABLE II

TABLE II  
Average Grade Placement of Twelve Juvenile Books by Six Readability Formulas  
and by Approximately Sixty Children's Librarians  
with Average Deviations of Librarians' Judgments from Readability Scores

| Book   | Grade Place-<br>ment in<br><i>Children's Catalog</i> | Mean of Six<br>Readability<br>Formulas | Mean of<br>Librarians'<br>Ratings | Average Deviation<br>of Librarians'<br>Ratings |
|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Andersen, Hans C.<br><i>Andersen's Fairy Tales</i>                         | 4-6  | 5.78                                   | 5.82                              | .44  |
| Brink, Carol R.<br><i>Caddie Woodlawn</i>                                  | 6-8  | 6.13                                   | 6.37                              | .58  |
| Clemens, Samuel L.<br><i>Tom Sawyer</i>                                    | 5-9  | 7.17                                   | 6.78                              | .74  |
| DeAngeli, Marguerite<br><i>Henner's Lydia</i>                              | 3-5  | 5.33                                   | 4.99                              | .51  |
| Enright, Elizabeth<br><i>The Saturdays</i>                                 | 4-7  | 7.60                                   | 6.01                              | 1.6  |
| Gall, Alice and Grew<br><i>Ringtail</i>                                    | 3-5  | 4.89                                   | 4.93                              | .45  |
| Lattimore, Eleanor<br><i>Little Pear</i>                                   | 3-5  | 5.23                                   | 4.32                              | .91  |
| Spyri, Johanna<br><i>Heidi</i>   | 4-6  | 5.72                                   | 5.67                              | .48  |
| Stevenson, Robert L.<br><i>Treasure Island</i>                             | 6-9  | 6.85                                   | 7.40                              | .71  |
| Stong, Phil D.<br><i>Honk, the Moose</i>                                   | 4-5  | 5.35                                   | 5.09                              | .46  |
| Thorne-Thomsen,<br>Gudrun<br><i>East of the Sun &amp; West of the Moon</i> | 4-5  | 5.11                                   | 4.94                              | .54  |
| Travers, P. L.<br><i>Mary Poppins</i>                                      | 4-7  | 6.25                                   | 5.64                              | .72  |

### Summary

Sixty-three children's librarians in ten states rated the difficulty of sixty juvenile books whose titles appear on a minimum of three well-known booklists for children. The librarians did not agree on placing the books at any one grade level or even at two consecutive grade levels. As a group they typically gave a range of three or four grade levels for which they regarded the books as suitable. Although the individual librarians differ widely among themselves, the average of their judgments approximates closely the average of the more objective placements of twelve of the books derived from six readability formulas, the Dale-Chall, Flesch, Lewerenz, Lorge, Winnetka and Yoakam formulas. There is a slight tendency for the librarians to rate the twelve books as somewhat easier than the formulas place them. This is also true of the difficulty rating of the books given in the *Children's Catalog*. The individual librarian usually deviates at least one grade from the average placement of the six readability formulas. The results indicate that serious questions may be raised about the practices of certain publishers of juvenile books and of certain compilers of book-lists in giving a grade placement of a book on the basis of a few so-called "expert" opinions of its difficulty.

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# "It Was Thundering"

MARY E. BOWERS<sup>1</sup>

Ann's stories were sad stories, stories filled with fears and family troubles. Sometimes Ann called them dream stories. At other times she was frank and labeled them true. Each story told much about Ann.

Ann lived in a downtown apartment. The doorway to the hall opened from the sidewalk of the town's main street. Down the dim hallway past a shop, were the rooms where nine-year-old Ann lived with her mother, step-father, and half-brother.

There wasn't a yard for Ann to play in. When she played in the apartment or invited other children home with her, the noise awakened the baby or disturbed her mother. She might have gone to the playground, but her mother had decided that Ann could not be trusted to keep out of trouble. Ann amused herself, when she wasn't running errands or caring for the baby, by talking to people on the street and in the shops.

One of Ann's first stories was one telling of her parents' efforts to break her of the habit of talking with strangers.

Once when my sister was a little girl she used to talk to strangers. She would ask them for rides. She would say things that are not so and she wouldn't come home until about 9 o'clock. One day my father dressed like a stranger and she came to him. My father took her home and took those strange clothes off and spanked my sister. From that day on she has never talked to strangers.

Ann's mother was very nervous and easily upset. Many of Ann's stories told

about her mother being sick, and about family difficulties.

Once there lived a little old man and his wife. They were always sad because they couldn't go and find a job. They were always sick. When the man was sick the wife was well, and when the wife was sick the old man was well. So it went on and on and on. One day the old wife was so sick that she came pretty near dying. The old man found a job. Can you guess what happened after this? They got a little boy. So the old man and woman and their son lived happily ever after.

The mother was greatly disappointed in Ann. Why did Ann get into trouble? She had never caused her mother any trouble when she was a child. Ann had a great fear of causing her mother distress. Ann's greatest concern when in difficulty was keeping it from her mother.

Once there lived a lady who was always sick. One day the school teacher went to see her. The lady was so sick that she came pretty near dying when the teacher was coming in to see her. So my teacher went and called a doctor. Before the doctor even started to walk out of his office the lady had died. The teacher was very sad.

Ann often stayed with the baby. Sometimes she was alone in the apartment at night. Ann wrote about the fears she had when left with her brother.

Once there was a very old man. He was always happy. He had twelve children. But his happiness didn't last long. One day he left his oldest girl with the other children. It was at night and the house caught on fire. The girl was asleep. She woke up about when the fire started but

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the flames smothered her. All twelve children were killed in the fire. When the old man heard about it he had to go to the hospital. Then he went to the funeral.

Again Ann wrote a story of fear which she called "A Dream Story."

One night I dreamed that some men had on their truck that they were our neighbors, but they weren't neighbors. They were crooks and they were going to kill someone. I had my brother. We were going to the circus. As I left Main Street, I saw these people. One of the men was going to kill me and my brother, but he didn't have a chance. A policeman happened to be riding around, and he saw them.

All of Ann's first stories were filled with tragedy. She poured out her fears in story after story. Her stories were accepted. They were imaginary. Although the teacher often discussed the stories with Ann, she never revealed the fact that she knew the stories were about Ann. The story which Ann called "Susie" seemed to be the climax in the long series of tragedies.

Once there lived a little girl. Her name was Susie. Susie was a pretty little girl, but Susie was always sick. If she wasn't sick, she was in trouble. So one day Susie was taking her baby sister for a walk. After Susie and her sister walked a little ways, Susie was very cruel. Can you guess what Susie did? She reached into her pocket and pulled a knife out and threw it into her little sister's heart. So happened, it was lucky that the police came just in time and saved Susie's sister.

The teacher drew Ann aside and talked with her about her story. "Why do you think Susie hurt her baby sister?" asked the teacher, earnestly.

"I think it was because she had to take care of her sister all of the time," replied Ann, seriously.

"Do you think it was the little sister's

fault that Susie had to take care of her?" asked the teacher.

"No," said Ann, hesitantly.

"Susie's mother or father asked her to watch the baby," the teacher continued. "The baby knew nothing about it. I don't think Susie would want to hurt the baby. Do you?"

"No," said Ann, slowly. "Let's write at the end of the story, 'Susie was really glad that she didn't hurt her little sister.'"

From this time, Ann's stories had less of tragedy in them. There was a feeling of triumph.

Once I dreamed that Julia and Jennie were going to the movies with me. We were going to see Roy Rogers, but we were surprised. We didn't see Roy Rogers. We saw some people fighting. Boy, oh boy, did we have fun! Then Jennie and I started to fighting. She always thought that she could beat me up, but she was wrong. I won!

Ann dreamed of being an obedient, deserving daughter—a daughter her mother could be proud of.

One night I dreamed that my mother had told me to watch my brother while she went down the street. So I told my mother that I would watch him. My mother got ready to go. After my mother had left, I put my brother to sleep. Then I watched Toby, a boy on television who was a great hero. Something happened! On top of the television there was a present. On the present there was a note saying, "Happy birthday to my daughter Ann." I had forgotten it was my birthday.

"The Rain Storm," one of Ann's last stories in the fourth grade term, was labeled true.

Today when I was walking to school I saw some real nice slips in the store window. I was on my way when something tapped me on the nose. Can you guess what it was? It was raining! Later while my teacher was talking to us in school

(Continued on Page 275)

# Implications in Emotionally Caused Reading Retardation

NORMAN YOUNG AND  
EUGENE L. GAIER<sup>1</sup>

Considerable evidence in the past decade has pointed to the pervasive role of emotional factors as a basic cause in reading retardation. This trend represents a departure from what might be termed the more traditional concept wherein reading disabilities have been attributed to various physical and physiological defects. Among the factors subsumed under this traditional approach to reading disabilities have been eye defects such as myopia and aniseikonia, visual motor performance, lateral dominance, and rates of perception (2). In addition, many investigators, in seeking comparatively simple explanations, have postulated low inherited intelligence, lack of interest, and poor attitudes towards the school as bringing about reading difficulties. What this approach has essentially emphasized is a one-to-one relationship between one of the above single factors and reading retardation. It is quite evident that this belief is prevalent in most elementary schools, and the remedial techniques that have been set up have incorporated this customary explanation as a major premise in remediation.

The new approach does not discard the aforementioned factors in themselves. Rather it is here recognized that these are causes that exist in a pattern of factors wherein the needs of the child are predominant. It is also recognized that some

of the emotional difficulties that do exist in the child may be brought on by physical defects.

The components of emotional patterns leading to reading difficulties are varied and complex. Sibling jealousy (4), parental overindulgence (10), excessive negativism (6), parental rejection (5), social class differences, general home insecurity, instability, and general feelings of inadequacy have all been listed in the literature.

## *Multiple Causation*

In the light of this change of emphasis from single factor causation to a pattern of personality problems interfering with reading skills, it would seem that the traditional way of coping with these difficulties must be reexamined, in many cases revised, and perhaps totally replaced. The intent of the present paper is to examine some of the implications of this shift of emphasis.

After one examines both the scientific and popular literature, he must conclude that there is general agreement that social and emotional maturity are as necessary as intellectual maturity in the problem of reading ability. There is strong feeling (4, 5, 6) that a great disadvantage exists when the schools consider the cognitive aspects of behavior as being more important.

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ant than the affective aspects of behavior in dealing with reading disability. Thus, a primary consideration must be given by educators in this area to the point that their minds should never be closed to the constant and intrinsic interactions existing between personality and learning. There must be a recognition of the existence of patterns of behavior. The school curriculum should be planned to meet the needs set up by these behavioral patterns of the individual. In other words, learners must be approached through their own specific needs and interests.

#### *A Specific Example*

To possibly exemplify the foregoing, we make mention of the unquestionably *apparent* superiority of the female in the area of reading. This consideration has been a bone of contention among psychologists. It is here felt that Lecky's views (9) on this problem are quite accurate as stated in his self-consistency theory of personality. In his book, *Self-Consistency, A Theory of Personality* (9), Lecky makes a special issue of sex differences in reading. In general, his thesis is that all too often a person is found with lack of ability in an area not because of inherent deficiencies. Rather, this disability is brought about because the person cannot see the consistency of school subject matter with his general mode of personality behavior. He feels that the reason boys read more poorly than girls is that the early books have content which is inconsistent with the culturally defined masculine role as perceived by little boys. When a boy is made to read about "Betty and Bobby jump rope" or the "run Mary run" type of material and play tame games rather than en-

gaging in the cowboy-and-Indian games he prefers, his interest, involvement, and emotional arousal cannot be expected to reach an optimal level.

Thus, if we were to give boys more adventuresome and *manly* material, as Lecky suggests, and the present writers would agree, these seemingly apparent differences would disappear, and thereby change the statistics on sex differences in reading considerably. Whenever a child is given something inconsistent with his personality and is frustrated in his attempts to cope with this, it may bring on a type of chain reaction behavior, wherein the original inability is caused by inconsistency of the material with his personality, and the second inability is caused by emotional instability brought on by frustration with the first material. In the light of this, considerable attention should be given by both teachers and educators to the content of the material presented to the child in the course of his initial reading experiences. Material presented to the student must be meaningful, attracting rather than repelling, for his attitude toward the content may interfere with his reading performance.

#### *Need for Teacher Education*

Another important implication is that a program of teacher education in the areas of mental health be set up. The teacher must be cautioned against regarding *symptoms* in reading problems as *causes*. She must be counseled in seeing the symptom as a manifestation of something much more basic to the child's personality. Certainly it is to be admitted that the classroom teacher is not prepared to delve into deep psychological problems.



A program of teacher education, therefore, would have as a possible fundamental aim the use of the psychological clinic, the reading section of the psycho-educational clinic, the reading clinic, and whatever other facilities might be available to ameliorate and prevent reading disability. Thus, the school system, the classroom teacher, and the psychologist would be able to work together.

In order that the teacher may become more sophisticated in the area of recognizing and understanding the emotional components, either resultant or causative, and in order to preclude sending all poor readers to the psychological clinic, each teacher, along with her work in physical diagnosis, should have work in the principles of mental hygiene. Many schools of education, cognizant of the great need of this kind of material for teachers, have made it a required part of the graduate curriculum. In addition, all teachers must be made aware of the new developments in diagnosis and prognosis in the reading area. A major purpose of this paper is to point out that new developments are ever occurring, and the education field should be changing accordingly.

By recognizing behavior patterns of students, and teaching in accordance with them, we can see education as not only playing a positive role in the prevention of one area of reading disability, but in general playing a positive role in the formation of emotional stability. In general, we would go along with Betts (2, 3) when he points out certain attitudes that should be acquired by the remedial teacher. He tells us that the prognosis of a reading disability case is hopeful and that

many difficulties can be more easily remedied by soliciting the cooperation of health specialists. In addition, he writes that many retarded readers are of normal and some of even superior intelligence, yet each must be approached through his own specific interests. Moreover, remedial instruction should be regarded as a privilege extended to the child. This attitude, in the writers' opinions, is needed in every remedial situation.

Considering the foregoing, we have seen teachers who do not call on the available agencies to help them with their problems. There has been ignorance concerning the existence, for example, of the psychological clinic as well as a lack of understanding of its purpose. They have the time worn notion that only *crazy* people go there. This ignorance on the part of teachers, educators, and parents should be overcome by a program of public education to get rid of the fear resulting when the term *psychology*, *psychological clinic*, and the term *clinic*, in general, are mentioned. Such attitudes on the part of those who implement these very remedial programs tend to interfere with the improvement of reading.

#### *The Role of Motivation*

What is implicit throughout this paper, and what is salient in any workable remedial program, is the paramount role of motivation. This multiple factor theory of motivation in retardation is no better handled anywhere than in the investigations of the Dartmouth Eye Institute (1). Here we can see the great number of seemingly evident reasons for retardation being counteracted by motivational factors. Certainly, vision is a prepotent factor



in reading. Yet, in this investigation of Bender et al (1), those who were handicapped visually sometimes became numbered among the best readers because of other mitigating and ameliorative factors in their life-space. From this, it follows that the remedial worker must increase student motivation that is in harmony with his other needs, both tissue and learned needs. This is what McCullough, Strang, and Traxler (17) set forth when they write that educators should foster a "dominant motivation" which helps individuals achieve efficiency in reading despite a multitude of individual unfavorable conditions of visual factors.

The writers, in going through great numbers of research papers in the area of remedial reading, feel that a definite need exists for a central coordinating agency. For all too often, what might result in significant findings is negated by unreliable statistics, uncontrolled variables, dubious experimental design, poor sampling techniques, a lack of understanding of the relationships between the actual practice and the concepts behind this practice, lack of previous important findings, and generally needless overlapping in investigations. In addition, the studies are mainly small sample inferential investigations basing, all too often, inferences of causation upon correlative concomitance. It is also felt that in research, the variable of attitude toward content read should be controlled, for this may significantly influence the reading performance of the individual.

The attitude of the teacher is important in the genesis of reading difficulty as well as in its cure. In addition, personal

attitudes, as well as parental attitudes, may affect such areas as critical reading (7). The whole area of attitude study is considered fruitful for further research into the etiology of reading difficulty.

New research is needed in the area of textbooks for remedial teachers. While it is true that the trend in textbooks in reading has been in the direction of recognizing emotional factors in reading retardation, only a small fraction of the amount and kind of material that should be presented ever is. It is recognized, however, that much of the resource material from which textbooks are written may be barren of the conclusive data, which may be why the textbook writers of the past possibly and deservedly felt dubious about the presentation of this resource material. Nevertheless, consideration of emotional factors is increasing, and while many platitudes are found, one may discern much insight into the problem by Gates (8) and McCullough, Strang, and Traxler (11), for example. Essentially, it has been noticed that textbook writers who point to the manifest importance of emotional factors in reading state it definitively and then forget about it without giving the reader any hint of how to cope with the problem.

What does all of this mean? In general, it is clear that the whole area of emotional factors in reading difficulty has been a worthwhile one to explore. This article has pointed out the discrepancies in experiments, comments, inferences, and observations. There are indeed few writers who would deny the part of emotion in reading. Our most salient question must be attacked and answered:

How do emotional factors work and how much is reading affected by them? The problem for the future is evidently in defining and investigating the intervening variables that both facilitate and inhibit the reading process.

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### "IT WAS THUNDERING"

(Continued from Page 270)

about pioneers, suddenly there was a loud bump, bump. Something had happened! It was thundering."

How much Ann's stories changed! Writing stories didn't make Ann a model child. It didn't solve all of Ann's difficulties. Writing gave Ann an acceptable outlet for her cramped and repressed feelings.

Ann had written stories when she entered the fourth grade class. The stories were brief accounts of the stories she had read. After Ann's mother complained bitterly about the untruths Ann told, the teacher decided that Ann should have a better way to tell her stories.

When the teacher mentioned writing

a story, Ann wasn't too enthusiastic. "Did you ever write a fairy story?" asked the teacher. It wasn't until the teacher mentioned dream stories that Ann showed interest.

The first day, Ann wrote three dream stories without stopping. Her writing was like food to a hungry person. She wrote dozens of stories before the school term closed. The teacher felt that many of the misunderstandings over Ann's untruths were eliminated.

Ann's writing was like the breaking of a storm—a storm of emotions. As Ann wrote, "Something had happened! It was thundering."

## Substitutes For The Comic Books II

CONSTANCE CARR<sup>1</sup>

Part I of this article dealt with stories that could substitute for the "funny" comic books. Part II will deal with those that substitute for the adventure stories.

The longer you work with children's books the more excited you get about them. You realize their value for children by providing a catharsis for pent up emotions, by giving insight in understanding personal problems, by discovering new knowledges of people and places, besides providing a leisure time activity that will stand in good stead all of a lifetime.

If you have read Part I of this article and go on into the books listed later in this section, you will probably think of a half dozen books that belong on the list. The list would never be complete. Keep your own file and star those with which you have the most success.

You will notice that most of the books, with the exceptions of the folk tales and the jungle stories, stay pretty close to the American scene and American people. The comic books for which we are substituting have given us that particular cue. We believe that the first appeal is made by providing books which have scenes and situations that are easily imagined or else are completely fantastic.

This excludes many good books, told with excitement, of foreign children or olden times. But it is hoped that some of your group will soon be ready for *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*,<sup>2</sup> or the great

<sup>2</sup>Lewis, Elizabeth. *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*, Winston. 1932.

hero stories such as Cuchulain or the Kalevala.

The Laura Ingalls Wilder stories are beautifully written books with their own mild excitement that will not intrigue the reader who has had too heavy a diet of "Bat Man" and "Flash Gordon." But for some of the youngsters emerging into reading via some of the shorter, humorous books they will offer a nice contrast in reading fare.

Unfortunately, some good stories label the children's ages either by word or picture. A twelve year old boy does not want to read about a seven year old and probably won't go on even though the story might fill the other requirements he would like.

Any classification attempted has been necessarily arbitrary. Many of the books fit in so well in many places but were listed in the place thought to be most fitting or place needing a variety of suggestions. *Call It Courage* is purely and simply an adventure story involving blood and thunder characteristics, but if children are clamoring for jungle stories let us be sure to put it there.

The adult should have fun with his group by discovering some of the books with children—by reading to them. Read one of the less known tall tales, introduce the others and let the children take over from there.

<sup>1</sup>A graduate student at the University of Minnesota.

As children are bringing back or choosing books, enjoy discussions with a child about a book he has read—recall an amusing or exciting portion. Other children nearby will soon have the book in hand.

Sometimes a book makes a slow start or looks too thick and heavy to begin. Take a book like *Smoky, the Cowhorse* and read a portion and then let children finish by themselves.

If you find the books in one area are not proving as popular as you had hoped, try a completely different area. If the children do not react to the excitement of the Grimm folktales try those stories listed under "Real Boys and Girls as Heroes."

#### *Books of Fantastic Adventure*

The biggest number of books classified as popular in the Witty study<sup>3</sup> comes under the term "adventure." "Superman" and "Batman" are stories of fantastic adventure and the most popular of all the comics. Right versus might, good versus evil, and do or die situations come in various settings in the comic books.

In some ways, this is the hardest group for which to substitute, especially in the easier reading bracket. Yet this writer is suggesting that, beyond the few "present day" books, children can find the elements of danger, suspense, and swift moving action in some of the folk and fairy tales themes. We will list some of these folk tale books. Most of them will be in the fourth through sixth reader level.

The Grimm Brothers' fairy tales have many stories in which the hero spends the night in a haunted castle, of evil people trying

<sup>3</sup>Witty, Paul A. "Children's Interests in Reading the Comics," *Journal of Experimental Education*, X (December, 1941), 100-104.

to harm the good, of grim sports carried on in eerie settings. Most collections contain more stories than pictures and the books look thick, often the print is rather small but once children try a story or two they have a satisfying field of excitement.

*Household Stories*; illustrated by Walter Crane, MacMillan, 1923.

*Grimm's Fairy Tales*; illustrated by Fritz Kredel, Grosset, 1945.

*The House in the Wood*; illustrated by Leslie Brooke, Warne, 1909.

*Fairy Tales*; illustrated by Hope Dunlap, Rand, 1913.

The English fairy stories will have battles with giants to provide excitement.

Jacobs, Joseph: *English Fairy Tales*; and *More English Fairy Tales*; illustrated by John D. Batten, Putnam's.

Steel, Flora Annie: *English Fairy Tales*; illustrated by Arthur Rackham, MacMillan, 1918.

The Norwegian folk tales combine the heroic deed accomplished with fearful odds.

Asbjornsen, Peter and Moe, Jorgen: *Popular Tales from the Norse*; and *Tales from the Field*; Putnam's.

D'Aulaire, Ingri and Parin: *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*; (Be sure to see this for the excellent illustrations.) Viking, 1938.

Asbjornsen, Peter: *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*; illustrated by Kay Neilsen, Doran, 1929.

Thorne-Thomsen, Mrs. Gudrun: *East O' the Sun and West O' the Moon*; illustrated by Frederick Richardson, Row Peterson, 1946.

Brown, Abbie F.; *In the Days of Giants*; Houghton.

Andrew Lang has made excellent collections of fairy tales from many sources including Hans Christian Andersen, Madame D'Aulnoy, etc. Longmans have brought out new issues of these old favorites with new illustrators.

*Blue Fairy Book*; illustrated by Kitchen, 1948.

*Green Fairy Book*; illustrated by Dorothy L. Gregory, 1948.

*Red Fairy Book*; illustrated by Marc Simont, 1948.



*Yellow Fairy Book*; illustrated by Janice Holland, 1948.

*Crimson Fairy Book*; illustrated by Ben Kutchen, 1947.

*Rose Fairy Book*; illustrated by Vera Bock, 1948.

*Violet Fairy Book*; illustrated by Dorothy L. Gregory, 1947.

*Olive Fairy Book*; illustrated by Anne Vaughan, 1949.

*Orange Fairy Book*; illustrated by Christine Price, 1949.

Hans Christian Andersen's stories will not appeal to all children but many will find magic in some of the mystic qualities of his stories. Certainly, one of his well illustrated books should be available to children. His book, *Fairy Tales*, has been illustrated by many outstanding artists:

Elizabeth MacKinty, Coward, 1933.

Eric Pape, Macmillan, 1921.

Jean O'Neill, World Publishing, 1946.

Rex Whistler, Oxford, 1936.

Bowman, James C., and Bianco, Margery have a collection of Finnish folk tales with one section devoted to tales of magic.

*Tales from a Finnish Tupa*; illustrated by Laura Bannon, Whitman, 1936.

The Arabian fairy tales are the most complex and colorful of all. Because of their complexity they are above sixth reader level. The setting of the stories has tempted many illustrators to make some very beautiful editions.

Colum, Padraic: *The Arabian Nights*; illustrated by Eric Pape, MacMillan, 1923.

Housman, Laurence: *Stories from the Arabian Nights*, illustrated by Edmund Dulac, Doran, 1923.

Wiggin, K. W., and Smith, N.: *Arabian Nights*; illustrated by Maxfield Parrish, Scribner's, 1909.

*The Arabian Nights Entertainments*; illustrated by Milo Winter, Rand, 1914.

Among the modern day books we have these that satisfy the need for fantastic adventure:

*Below Fourth Grade:*

Grahame, Kenneth: *The Reluctant Dragon*; illustrated by Ernest Shepard, Holiday. This

dragon was more interested in poetry than in fighting, but his friend, the shepherd boy, persuades him to stage a mock battle with St. George to the satisfaction of the countryside.

Gannett, Ruth Stiles: *My Father's Dragon* (1948); and *Elmer and the Dragon* (1950); illustrated by Ruth Chrisman Gannett, Random. "My father" is Elmer who, as a little boy, goes to Wild Island and rescues a dragon from the animals there. Elmer is a clever lad and faces many dangers before he and the dragon get home.

*Fourth through Sixth:*

Barrie, Sir James M.; *Peter and Wendy*; illustrated by Bedford, Scribner's. This old tale of the boy who never grew up and how he leads his friends to Never-Never-Land inhabited by fairies, pirates, and crocodiles is a perennial favorite.

Leaf, Munro: *Sam and the Superdoop*; Viking, 1948. A fifth grade boy with "comic-bookitus" goes off to visit the various characters of the comics. Leaf's cartoon illustrations in black and white add to the comic book effect. But do beware of pushing this book as a "cure-all." Put it out and let children discover it for themselves.

Leskov, Nicholas: *The Steel Flea*; illustrated by Mstislav Dobujinsky, Harper, 1943. Perhaps the Russian setting of this fantastic tale of a craftsman who put shoes on a microscopic steel flea will be frowned on in some circles, but it does fit the qualities of fantastic adventure. The pictures are excellent in design.

Watkins-Pitchford, Denys: *The Little Grey Men*; Scribner's, 1949. Three ancient gnomes go in search of a long lost brother. There is eerie excitement for the reader as they go through Crow Wood and encounter Giant Grum. The illustrations by the author add greatly to the magic of the tale.

*Above the Sixth Grade:*

Goudge, Elizabeth: *The Little White Horse*; illustrated by C. Walter Hodges, Coward, 1946. This modern fairy tale, although very long, will be particularly satisfying for girls as it combines romance, mystery,



and magic in a picturesque, impossible kingdom.

Heinlein, Robert A.: *Rocket Ship Galileo*, (1947); *Space Cadet* (1948); and *Farmer in the Sky* (1950); Scribner's. Three stories of science fiction set in the twenty-first century. There are fearful difficulties to work through as well as humor in these books so should prove useful with Buck Roger's fans.

Irving, Washington: *Rip Van Winkle*; illustrated by Arthur Rackham, Doubleday. This is a good edition for the readers we are trying to attract, for the pictures are exciting and it is printed for easy reading on well margined pages.

### **Books with Blood and Thunder**

The legendary heroes of America and England, the backwoodsmen and pioneers overcoming the odds of frontier America, sea stories, and the stories of dogs and horses told with exciting climaxes are the stories we can use to counteract the general blood and thunder stories of the comics. There must be exciting danger, great odds against the hero and much fast action in each of them.

#### **Below fourth grade:**

C. W. Anderson "makes" good horse books with his wonderful illustrations and his stories with good climaxes. The first four are easily read with second and third grade reader ability. The last four are more difficult but most of the stories are told in less than a hundred pages.

*Billy and Blaze*; MacMillan, 1936.

*Blaze and the Gypsies*; MacMillan, 1937.

*Blaze and the Forest Fire*; MacMillan, 1938.

*Blaze Finds the Trail*; MacMillan, 1950.

*Big Red*; (a biography of Man O' War), MacMillan, 1943.

*Bobcat*; MacMillan, 1941

*High Courage*; MacMillan, 1941.

*Salute*; MacMillan, 1940.

Ardizzone, Edward: *Tim and the Brave Sea Captain* (1936) and *Tim to the Rescue* (1949); Oxford. Tim goes to sea with

his grandfather and has exciting adventures. These are picture books with a story that will satisfy even the slow, over-age reader.

Besterman, Catherine: *The Quaint and Curious Quest of Johnny Longfoot*; Merrill, 1947. Johnny goes to visit his Uncle Lucas and learns his "thriftiness" but the animals who guard the uncle join Johnny and they all have a marvelous adventure. The illustrations in watercolor by Chappell add much to the whimsy of the story.

Swayne, Sam: *Great Grandfather and the Honey Tree*; Viking, 1949. A tall tale of grandfather who fills the family larder for winter with one shot. This is a quickly read book. The illustrations match the swashbuckling telling of the tale.

#### **Sixth grade and above:**

The tall tales of America can be read at this reading level. The interest level is for all ages, so some less mature readers may swing into these stories.

McCormick, Dell: *Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe*, (1936); and *Tall Timber Tales*, (1939); Caxton.

Rounds, Glen: *Ol' Paul, The Mighty Logger*; Holiday, 1949.

Shephard, Esther: *Paul Bunyan*; illustrated by Rockwell Kent, Harcourt, 1941.

Felton, Harold W.: *Legends of Paul Bunyan*, Knopf.

Turney, Ida Virginia: *Paul Bunyan, the Work Giant*; Binford, 1941.

Untermeyer, Louis: *The Wonderful Adventures of Paul Bunyan*, illustrated by Everett G. Jackson, Heritage.

Wadsworth, Wallace: *Paul Bunyan and His Great Blue Ox*; Doubleday, 1941.

Bowman, James C.: *Pecos Bill*; illustrated by Laura Bannon, Whitman, 1937.

Peck, Leigh: *Pecos Bill and Lightning*; Houghton, 1940; illustrated by Kurt Wiese.

Irwin Shapiro has collected and written stories of tall tale heroes less generally known. These are good books for slow readers because they are simply written, include much humor, and big things happen.

*Casey Jones and His Locomotive*; illustrated by Donald McKay, Messner, 1944.

*How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick*; illustrated by Donald McKay, Messner, 1942.

*Steamboat Bill and the Captain's Top Hat*; illustrated by Donald McKay, Messner, 1943.

*John Henry and the Double Jointed Steam Drill*; illustrated by James Daugherty, Messner, 1945.

*Yankee Thunder; The Legendary Life of Davy Crockett*; illustrated by James Daugherty, Messner, 1944.

*Joe Magarac and His Citizenship Papers*; illustrated by James Daugherty, 1948, Messner.

Mauritz Jagendorf has been making some interesting collections of legendary characters. Mainly he has found some of the less known characters of the East coast of the United States but he has one book of Tyll Ulenspiegel, Germany's legendary person.

*The Marvelous Adventures of Johnny Darling*; illustrated by Howard Simon, Vanguard, 1949.

*New England Bean Pot*; illustrated by Donald McKay, Vanguard, 1948.

*Tyll Ulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*; illustrated by Fritz Eichenberg, Vanguard, 1938.

*Upstate, Downstate*; illustrated by Donald McKay, Vanguard, 1949.

Collections of tall tales:

Blair, Walter: *Tall Tale America*; illustrated by Glenn Rounds,

Carmer, Carl: *The Hurricane's Children*; Farrar, 1937.

Malcolmson, Anne: *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*; illustrated by Robert McCloskey, Houghton, 1941.

Miller, Olive B.; *Heroes, Outlaws and Funny Fellows*; illustrated by Richard Bennett, Doubleday, 1939.

*Writers with exciting horse and dog stories:*

Marguerite Henry's stories of horses hold the reader fascinated whether set in this day and age or days of long ago. The stories are fast moving and very satisfying. Wesley

Dennis does a superb job of illustrating the Henry books.

*Benjamin West and His Cat Grimalkin*; Merrill, 1949. (Not a horse story, but a good one.)

*Born to Trot*; Rand, 1950.

*Justin Morgan Had a Horse*; Follett, 1945.

*King of the Wind*; Rand, 1947. (Newbery Award winner)

*Misty of Chincoteague*; Rand, 1949.

*Sea Star; Orphan of Chincoteague*; Rand, 1949.

Margaret and Helen Johnson have combined to write and illustrate good horse and dog stories. They often take a special breed and weave the story around an outstanding animal of that breed. The stories are usually less than a hundred pages and pack enough action to be satisfying. They can be read by the fourth through sixth grade reading ability group.

*Barney of the North*; Harcourt, 1939.

*Derry, the Wolfhound*; Harcourt, 1943.

*Dixie Dobie, A Sable Island Pony*; Harcourt, 1945.

*Gay, A Shetland Sheepdog*; Morrow, 1948.

*Rex of the Coast Patrol*; Harcourt, 1944.

*Stablemates*; Harcourt, 1942.

*Sir Lancelot and Scamp*; Harcourt, 1945.

*Smallest Puppy, an Eskimo Dog*; Harcourt, 1940.

*Tim, Dog of the Mountains*; Harcourt, 1940.

O'Brien, Jack (John Sherman): The Silver Chief stories illustrated by Kurt Wiese and published by Winston have action, adventure and often mystery.

*Silver Chief, Dog of the North*; Winston, 1933.

*Return of Silver Chief*; Winston, 1943.

*Silver Chief to the Rescue*; Winston, 1937.

Salten, Felix: *Bambi*; Simon, 1928. Bambi's life in the forest is full of wonder and adventures. A realistic story although the animals converse. It is an easily read story.

Howard Pyle is well known for his writing and illustrating of English legends. The

stories are thrilling but not easy reading because he uses old English forms in conversation, and because of the length of the stories. Only the best known will be listed: (The last two can be read by the fourth through sixth grade readers.)

*Men of Iron*; Harper, 1891.

*Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*; Scribner's, 1946. Best for literary styles, adherence to the spirit and events of old ballads and wealth of historical background.

*Some Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*; Scribner's, 1935. Easiest.

*Story of King Arthur and His Knights*; Scribner's, 1933.

*Wonder Clock*; Harper, 1887. Pyle's own fairy tales.

*Pepper and Salt*; Harper, 1887. A collection of folk tales.

Glenn Rounds writes good stories of horses or rough and ready days in frontier places. His illustrations "pack punch" to match the stories.

*Blind Colt*; Holiday, 1941.

*Lumber Camp*; Holiday, 1937.

*Pay Dirt*; Holiday, 1938.

*Stolen Pony*; Holiday, 1948.

Joseph Altsheier has written many exciting stories with historical settings, some in the Civil War, Mexican War, or the Indian warfare of the earlier days. The stories are long — all over three hundred pages and the few illustrations are negligible but the stories are packed with action. There are 21 books but only those starred in the *Children's Catalogue* will be given.

*Horseman of the Plains*; illustrated by

C. L. Bull, Macmillan, 1910.

*Young Trailer*; Appleton, 1907.

Walter Farley has written stories of horses that are very popular with young readers because he builds exciting climaxes.

*Black Stallion*; illustrated by Keith Ward, Random, 1941.

*Black Stallion Returns*; illustrated by Keith Ward, 1945, Random.

*Black Stallion and Satan*; illustrated by Milton Menasco, Random, 1949.

*The Blood Bay Colt*; illustrated by Milton Menasco, Random, 1950.

*Island Stallion*; illustrated by Keith Ward, Random, 1948.

*Son of Black Stallion*; illustrated by Milton Menasco, Random, 1947.

Charles Hawes writes adventure stories of the sea set in the days of pirates. Intrigue and valiant battles build up the climaxes of the stories.

*Dark Frigate*; illustrated by A. O. Fischer, Little, 1934. (Newbery Award winner)

*Great Quest*; illustrated by George Varian, Little, 1921.

*The Mutineers*; illustrated by A. O. Fischer, Little, 1941.

James Kjelgaard writes of the Arctic or the north woods. His animals are naturally portrayed. There is a strong appeal for conservation made in stories which include plenty of excitement.

*Big Red*; illustrated by Bob Kuhn, Holiday, 1945.

*Forest Patrol*; illustrated by Tony Palazzo, Holiday, 1941.

*Rebel Siege*; illustrated by C. B. Wilson, Holiday, 1943.

*Buckskin Brigade*, illustrated by Ralph Roy, Jr., Holiday, 1947.

*Snow Dog*; illustrated by Jacob Landau, Holiday, 1948.

*Kalak of the Ice*; illustrated by Bob Kuhn, Holiday, 1949.

*Nose for Trouble*; Holiday, 1949.

*Wild Trek*; Holiday, 1950.

Joseph Lippincott has written exciting stories of the wild animal world which contacts the civilized world.

*Chisel Tooth, The Beaver*; illustrated by R. V. Shutts, Lippincott, 1936.

*The Wahoo Bobcat*; illustrated by Paul Bransom, Lippincott, 1950.

*Wilderness Champion; The Story of a Great Hound*; illustrated by Paul Bransom, Lippincott, 1944.

Elsie Singmaster writes adventure stories in a historical setting that will have special appeal for girls as well as boys. She often includes mystery in her action.

*Boy at Gettysburg*; Houghton, 1924.

*Emmeline*; Houghton, 1916.

*Rifles for Washington*; illustrated by F. E. Schoonover, Houghton, 1938.

*Swords of Steel*; illustrated by David Hendrickson, Houghton, 1933.

*When Sarah Saved the Day*; Houghton, 1909.

*Isle of Que*; illustrated by Elmer Hader, Longmans, 1948.

Frederick Litten has written many adventure stories for boys. Usually the heroes are in the young adult class and his books since the war have dealt with G.I.'s setting up in business. The stories are exciting and meant for a boy audience. Only two will be listed.

*Code of Champion*; illustrated by Bill Wickam, Westminster, 1950.

*The Kingdom of Flying Men*; Westminster, 1946.

Ball, Zachary (K. R. Masters): *Joe Panther*; illustrated by Elliott Means, Holiday, 1950. Joe is a Seminole Indian boy who proves himself in the Everglades. He has earned the right to go on a charter boat but also encounters more danger there.

Forbes, Esther: *Johnny Tremain*; illustrated by Lynd Ward, Houghton, 1944. (Newbery Award winner). Johnny lives in the exciting days prior to the American Revolution. Into those days is woven an exciting story of Johnny's own problems. This is a book with many qualities to recommend it.

London, Jack: *Call of the Wild* (1912); and *White Fang*; illustrated by Paul Bransom, Macmillan. These two books have been popular so long because they depict excitement of living in the far north. They are good animal stories.

Stevenson, Robert Louis: *Treasure Island*; illustrated by C. B. Falls, World Publishing, 1946. This classic of the sea and days of pirates should be available for those children who will tackle a long story.

### Cowboy Stories

These stories might be included with the "blood and thunder" group, but because the wild west comic books have been so popular with children we are giving them a special place of their own. Authors and publishers are aiding us by bringing out many new books. The ones given here will be the most exciting of the lot and

will not include those giving factual detail alone.

### Below fourth grade:

Sanford Tousey has a number of simply written stories which appeal to boys for excitement and setting. He does his own illustrations.

*Jerry and the Pony Express*; Doubleday, 1936.

*Stagecoach Sam*; Doubleday, 1940.

*Steamboat Billy*; Doubleday, 1935.

(Now available in Cadmus Books)

*Lumberjack Bill*; Houghton, 1943.

Burton, Virginia Lee: *Calico, the Wonder Horse or the Saga of Stewy Slinker*; Houghton, 1941, new edition 1950. A "come on" for all comic book addicts, this book has the pictures placed on the page in serial style. The story is fantastic but properly exciting with cattle rustling and a stage coach hold-up and a happy ending.

Hader, Berta and Elmer: *Little Appaloosa*; Macmillan, 1949. A beautiful book with pictures that intrigue the reader. The text is realistic — an every day boy in the cow country of today and his own horse. It is developed with exciting high-points satisfying to over-age readers.

Heal, Edith: *Dogie Boy*; Whitman, 1944. Another short book which tells of a boy who raised a "dogie" calf to be a blue ribbon winner and is promoted to the cowboys bunkhouse.

LeGrand: *Why Cowboys Sing in Texas*; Abingdon, 1950. An excellent humorous picture book done in black, white and pink. Written in rhythmic prose it is a tall tale of why the cowboy sings "yippee ti yi" in his songs.

### Fourth through sixth grade:

Katherine W. Eyre has written stories of excitement and horses in a western setting that are attractive for girls.

*Spurs for Antonia*, illustrated by Decie Merwin, Oxford, 1943.

*Star in the Willows*; illustrated by Gertrude How, Oxford, 1946.

Garst, Shannon and Warren: *Cowboys and Cattle Trails*; Wheeler, 1948. The story is exciting although the language has been simplified to aid reading. This is one of a series but all will fill the qualifications.



John Kendrick wants to be cowboy in 1872, before railroads had reached Texas. The questions and study helps at the end of the chapters may be discouraging to some children.

Mason, Miriam: *A Pony Called Lightning*; Macmillan, 1948. Lightning is an Indian pony who save his master's life. It is one of a series of easily read books that are very, very satisfying to children.

Warren, S.: *Ride Cowboy, Ride*; Harcourt, 1946. This is not as exciting as some of the other stories but it is well told. A boy earns the right to ride in the round up.

*Above sixth grade:*

James, Will: *Smoky*; Scribner's, 1926. This is a cowboy and horse story for all time. There is lots of excitement, although the reading is not easy because it is written in cowboy vernacular and there are many pages in the book.

*Sun Up; The Tales of Cow Camps*; Scribner's, 1931.

Regli, Adolph: *Partners in the Saddle*; Watts, 1950. There is never a dull moment for two boys in the panhandle in 1877. They meet up with rustlers, Indians and the tough everyday life of the cowboy.

**Jungle Stories**

The child who devours the jungle comic magazines may, at first, be disappointed in the jungle books we are suggesting. There will be no scantily clad women, or white men as queer jungle rulers. Perhaps we should only put our jungle books out and let children discover them for themselves through the illustrations. But there is plenty of excitement as man pits himself against the jungle with its terrors of overgrown paths, cannibals, snakes and insects. Danger is lurking ever near. When a child has finished one of these recommended books he will have the added satisfaction of knowing that he has seen a truer picture of jungle life.

*Below fourth grade:*

Enright, Elizabeth: *Kintu: A Congo Adventure*;

Farrar, 1935. Kintu must someday become chief of his tribe but he is afraid. How he spends the night in the jungle and saves himself by his own skills is an exciting story. This is an easy book with fullpage, brilliant pictures.

Carveth, Lysle: *Jungle Boy*; Longmans, 1945. A Filipino boy from the highlands wanders down to the lowlands and later saves his friends there. The story has jungle mysticism.

*Fourth through sixth grade:*

Sperry, Armstrong: *One Day with Manu*; Winston, 1933. Manu is a Polynesian boy of about 9. This is not an exciting plot but his activities are illustrated in many bold pictures with brilliant colors.

Steen, Elizabeth: *Red Jungle Boy*, Harcourt. This story tells of Indian ways in the jungles of Brazil.

*Above sixth grade:*

Armstrong Sperry has made a great contribution to children's books through telling exciting stories in romantic settings of the jungle and the Polynesian islands. His illustrations are powerful in the way they build the mood of the story. All great books have many uses and these of his are no exception.

*Call It Courage*; Macmillan, 1940. (Newbery Award winner.)

*Rain Forest*; Macmillan, 1947.

Johnson, Osa: *I Married Adventure*; Lippincott, 1940. A true story of the explorations and adventures of Osa and Martin Johnson. Although this is a very long book it is written in a very readable fashion. It is illustrated with photographs.

Waldeck, JoBesse McElveen: *Jungle Journey*; Viking, 1946. Another factual book that is well written. The narrative is not as exciting as Osa Johnson's.

DuChaille, Paul Belloni: *The Country of the Dwarfs*; Harper, 1928. Illustrated by Erick Berry. DuChaille did his adventuring in Africa during the Civil War. But the books he has written as accounts are still interesting reading.

**Detective Stories**

The comic book detective stories have little mystery in them—the criminal is

known with the hero usually an adult and the excitement lying in the chase. Books of mystery for children usually follow the pattern of having children or adolescents involved in helping to clear up the mystery. Try reading aloud one of these stories, encouraging the children to make their own deductions or plan what they might do next. You can be almost guaranteed of an enthusiastic interest in this emotionally healthy kind of story.

*Below fourth grade:*

Lockwood, Myrna: *The Violin Detective*; Oxford, 1940. A "gang" locates the missing scroll of a rare violin. This is an easily read story with good pictures.

*Fourth through sixth grade:*

Burgwyn, Meban Holman: *Lucky Mischief*; Oxford, 1949. An excellent story set in a negro community. It involves a boy, his 4-H calf, antagonism for a new boy in school, and an escaped convict.

Dodge, Mary Mapes: *Hans Brinker: Or The Silver Skates*; World Publishing, 1946. This old classic continues to come out in well illustrated editions. The story has action, and a mystery is solved in the end.

Kastner, Erich: *Emil and the Detectives*; Doubleday, 1935. If you don't know this story get acquainted with it. It is one of the best of its kind. A boy in Berlin has his money stolen but he enlists the aid of a "gang" and they track it down. Easy reading and clever illustrations make this a "must."

Lockwood, Myrna: *Mystery at Lonesome End*; Oxford, 1946. Two girls, 15 and 17, are helping in a Cape Cod gift shop. There is a murder and everyone is suspected in true mystery fashion until the girls and their friends solve it. A touch of romance will give it added appeal to girls in sixth grade and above.

*Above sixth grade:*

Stephen Meader has written many good books and into each he weaves a mystery and an interesting setting and often a good animal story. There are twenty-one books pub-

lished but we will list only the most popular.

*Boy with a Pack*; illustrated by Edward Shenton, Harcourt, 1941.

*Cedar's Boy*; illustrated by Lee Townsend, Harcourt, 1949.

*Jonathan Goes West*; illustrated by Edward Shenton, Harcourt, 1947.

*Long Trains Roll*; illustrated by Edward Shenton, Harcourt, 1944.

*Red Horse Hill*; illustrated by Lee Townsend, Harcourt, 1930.

*Trap Lines North; A True Story of Canadian Woods*; Dodd, 1936.

Howard Pease is another author to watch because he regularly brings out exciting stories that are well written. Many of his stories have sea settings, but all combine mystery with action. His characters are real and the outcomes are realistic.

*Secret Cargo*; Doubleday, 1931.

*Tattooed Man*; illustrated by Mahlon Blaine, Doubleday, 1926.

*Jinx Ship*; Doubleday, 1927.

*Ship Without a Crew*; Doubleday, 1934.

*Wind in the Rigging*; Doubleday, 1934.

*Hurricane Weather*; Doubleday, 1936.

*Foghorns*; Doubleday, 1937.

*Black Tanker*; Doubleday, 1941.

*Thunderbolt House*; illustrated by Armstrong Sperry, Doubleday, 1944.

*Heart of Danger*; Doubleday, 1946.

Eric Kelly's Newbery Award winner, *The Trumpeter of Krakow*, can well be classified as a mystery and much danger involved in protecting the Great Tarnov Crystal. A mad scientist and his dangerous mixtures add excitement to the story.

*The Trumpeter of Krakow*; Macmillan, 1928.

*Treasure Mountain*; illustrated by Raymond Lufkin, Macmillan, 1937.

Leighton, Margaret: *Singing Cave*; illustrated by M. de V. Lee, Houghton, 1945. This is a fairly short book set on a California cattle ranch and involves a mystery and archeology.

Jones, Louis C.: *Spooks of the Valley, Ghost Stories for Boys and Girls*; illustrated by Edwin H. Austin, Houghton, 1948. This may not be a book you will want to use

with your children. Two everyday boys meet the ghosts of upper Hudson and they hear many a tortured tale of how the ghosts came to be.

*Publishers' Addresses*

Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 150 5th Av., New York.  
 Aladdin Books, 554 Madison Av., New York, 22.  
 D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 35 W. 32nd St., New York.  
 Binford and Mort, 108 N. W. Ninth St., Portland, 9, Oregon.  
 Bobbs-Merrill Co., 468 4th Av., New York.  
 Cadmus Books (Same as E. M. Hale) 15 W. 48th St., New York.  
 Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho.  
 Coward-McCann Inc., 2 W. 45th St., New York.  
 The Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 393 4th Av., New York.  
 Dodd, Mead and Co., Inc., 443-449 4th Av., New York.  
 George H. Doran, (Same as Doubleday, Doran & Co.)  
 Doubleday, Doran and Co., Inc., 75 Franklin Av., Garden City, New York.  
 Farrar and Rinehard, Inc., 232 Madison Av., New York.  
 Follet Publishing Co., 1255 S. Wabash Av., Chicago, Ill.  
 Grosset and Dunlap, 1140 Broadway, New York.  
 E. M. Hale and Co., Publishers, 3100 Cherry St., Milwaukee, Wisc.  
 Harcourt, Brace and Co., Inc., 383 Madison Av., New York.  
 Harper Brothers, 49 East 33rd St., New York, 16.  
 Heritage Press, 595 Madison Av., New York, 22.  
 Holiday House, 225 Varick St., New York.  
 Henry Holt and Co., Inc., 1 Park Av., New York.  
 Houghton Mifflin Co., 386 4th Av., New York.  
 Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 730 5th Av., New York.  
 J. B. Lippincott Co., 227-231 S. 6th St., Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Little, Brown, and Co., 34 Beacon St., Boston.

Longmans, Green and Co., 114 5th Av., New York.  
 The Macmillan Co, 60 5th Av., New York.  
 Julian Messner, Inc., Publishers, 8 W. 40th St., New York.  
 Wm. Morrow and Co., Inc., 386 4th Av., New York.  
 Thomas Nelson and Sons, 381-385 4th Av., New York.  
 Oxford University Press, 114 5th Av., New York.  
 L. C. Page and Co., 53 Beacon St., Boston.  
 Pantheon Books Inc., 40 Washington Square, New York, 12.  
 The Platt and Munk Co., Inc., 200 5th Av., New York.  
 G. P. Putnam's Sons, Putnam Bldg., 26 W. 45th St., New York.  
 Rand McNally and Co., 536 S. Clark St., Chicago, Ill.  
 Random House, Inc., 20 E. 57th St., New York.  
 Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc., 386 4th Av., New York.  
 Row, Peterson and Co., 1911 Ridge Av., Evanston, Ill.  
 Wm. R. Scott, 248 W. 11th St., New York.  
 Chas. Scribner's Sons, 597 5th Av., New York.  
 Simon and Schuster, Inc., 386 4th Av., New York.  
 Vanguard Press Inc., 424 Madison Av., New York, 17.  
 Viking Press, Inc., 18 E. 48th St., New York.  
 Frederick Warne and Co., Inc., 381 4th Av., New York.  
 Franklin Watts, Inc., 285 Madison Av., New York, 17.  
 Westminster Press, Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia, Pa.  
 Wheeler Publishing Co., 2831 35 South Parkway, Chicago.  
 Albert Whitman and Co., 560 W. Lake St., Chicago, Ill.  
 Whittlesey House (McGraw Hill Book Co.) 330 W. 42nd St. New York, 18.  
 Wilcox and Follett, 1255 S. Wabash Av., Chicago, 5, Ill.  
 John C. Winston Co., 1006-1016 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.  
 World Publishing Co., 2231 W. 110th St., Cleveland 2, Ohio.

# Developing Spelling Ability Through Individual Vocabularies

JANE WILCOX COOPER<sup>1</sup>

## *A Methodological Bond Between Reading and Spelling*

When we consider the currently favored methods of teaching reading, we find certain emphases which rightly belong also in the teaching of spelling. These are (1) attention to individual differences, (2) development of meaningful use of the skill, and (3) work toward the establishment of an independent ability, broadly conceived. Let us consider these aspects of the reading program as they may apply to the spelling program.

### *Individual Differences*

The elementary school teacher knows well the importance of attention to individual differences. There are at least three ways of attending to these differences: (1) by allowing children to make use of their special abilities (e. g. drawing, singing, reading, etc.) in contributing to a project or program developed by the whole group, (2) by helping each child advance in every capacity and every specific skill from the level at which he, as an individual, actually is, and (3) by giving each child a chance to express his own personality and his own special interests. When talking about spelling we are concerned with the second and third means of attending to individual differences.

### *Individual Differences in Vocabulary Range and Interests*

The consideration of an important dif-

ference between reading and spelling will make it evident that even more attention to individual vocabulary differences can be included in a spelling program than in a reading program. In reading we have a definite reason for teaching a basic vocabulary. We teach first graders the words which we know will appear in their pre-primer allowing for individual differences in ability by teaching them to some children sooner than others. With spelling we have a different situation. We are free to begin by teaching children the words which they themselves have a desire and need to spell. We must remember that, although children learn to read in order to read what has already been written by someone else, they learn to spell in order to write something that nobody else has written yet. Each child's vocabulary range differs in degree and kind from that of others, and each child is somewhat unique in his interests and style of writing. Allowing children to write their own stories accomplishes automatically the ultimate in attention to individual differences of interest and vocabulary.

How do we get children to want to write their own stories? Probably the most important single factor in achieving this is a factor which is stressed by Ferebee, namely the establishment of a climate free

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from criticism.<sup>2</sup> Children are full of ideas, but they won't express them if they fear any sort of disapproval, however subtly disguised.

### *Individual Differences in Spelling Ability*

Teaching by story writing rather than word lists has an additional advantage which, oddly enough, might be called the advantage of forgetting individual differences. By this is meant that the children themselves forget about individual differences in ability level. Spelling, if taught without textbooks or word lists, does not necessitate grouping the children according to their ability. A group of children being helped by the teacher may and should contain both good and poor spellers. By avoiding ability-level grouping the teacher may be assured that no child will be reminded of the fact that he might not be as good a speller as others in the room. Any teacher who has ever heard a remark like, "My daughter is just as smart as Mary Smith. Why isn't she in the top group?" knows that ability-level grouping can be a problem, no matter how carefully it is handled. If the grouping is done as suggested above, then within the group there will be differences of spelling ability which must be taken care of. The teacher will need to be constantly aware of each individual child's capabilities in order to determine in a flash the type of help to give him for a word. Let us imagine a first or second grade group. A child needs the word "window" for his story. If it is Jerry who asks for the word, the teacher will without hesitancy print it

on the board. (She knows that he prints more slowly than the rest and is eager to get on with his story without delay. She knows that he needs the prestige of being one of the first to read his story to the class). If it is Marilyn who asks for the word, the teacher will remind her that "window" begins like "we," "was," and "were," and will then send her to the class dictionary. (She knows that Marilyn needs initial sound work and also that she would enjoy the chance to get up and walk across the room to consult the dictionary). If it is Mary who asks for the word, the teacher will lead her to notice that the word has two "sound parts," that the first part contains the word "in," and that the second part rhymes with slow. (She knows that Mary enjoys figuring out her own words and that Mary's reading group has just been studying the two sounds of the diphthong "ow.")

### *Meaningful Spelling*

Emphasis number two referred to above as the second methodological bond between reading and spelling concerns the simple fact that, just as reading is grasping the meaning of the printed word, spelling is conveying meaning via the printed word. The business of conveying meaning should be the main activity of the spelling program. In addition to creative expression there are other media such as letters (both social and business type), and records of knowledge and information (i. e., reports, summaries, outlines, essays, and the like). All of these are reasonable vehicles for the elementary school child's spelling work, but the informational and imaginative types of writing should be kept carefully separate and treated differ-

<sup>2</sup>June D. Ferebee, "Learning Form Through Creative Expression," *Elementary English*, XXVII. (February, 1950), 73-78.

ently. If the children are doing some essay-type writing about something they have been studying, the natural common vocabulary involved in the enterprise may be put on the board. However, if the type of writing being done is creative, a vocabulary placed on the board might prove stultifying. An adequate amount of work in written expression of all types leaves little time for the memorization of lists of unrelated words which have been chosen according to the ease or difficulty involved in learning them, or according to their frequency of use.

Emphasis number three involves ultimate aims. The real aim of teaching spelling is to develop a spelling ability which will enable the child to learn new words easily all his life. In order to assure that we are aiming for this it is necessary to consider the nature of spelling ability. Its relationship to reading ability is a salient point. Reading experience itself promotes the growth of both reading and spelling abilities. Word analysis activities do the same. Writing experience, while it promotes reading ability, affects spelling ability more. Another factor which may influence spelling more than reading growth is the factor of accurate mental imagery, the ability to see words correctly when they are not present. In word list teaching the children are led to develop this imagery by studying the words with an attempt to fix them in their minds. However, the question arises, "Does word study also develop an attitude towards words which interferes with smooth reading?" The importance of reading is such that most teachers would maintain that the teaching of spelling should not develop a mental set which might transfer nega-

tively to reading facility. If word study were to be rejected on this ground, what substitute would be available for developing mental imagery? To find such a substitute is a task for each individual teacher. She may devise various ways of leading the children to develop mental pictures of words. Care must be taken to keep in mind the aim of promoting general spelling ability. A rhyme like "'i' before 'e' except after 'c'" is a tricky memory device, but it does not encourage mental pictures and furthermore is applicable to so few words that it cannot be said to promote general ability.

The following mental imagery technique, applicable to a large group of one-syllable words may be suggested as appealing to children in the primary grades. It may be called the "sandwich picture" technique. Readiness for it depends on a knowledge of which letters are vowels and which letters are consonants and on some word analysis learnings such as double and single consonant sounds. The teacher will show that many one-syllable words may be thought of as sandwiches. The consonants are the bread, the vowels are the filling. Words which have "long" sounds in them are fancy sandwiches because they either have a double filling (e. g., "need") or a pickle (silent e) on the side (e. g., "ride"). This technique gives the child a feeling for vowel placement and narrows his problem down to the choice of correct vowels on the basis of his vowel sound knowledge plus an ability to judge what "looks right."

What about the many words which do not fit into the "sandwich" category? Some of them are taught by word analysis

work (for example, those which involve changing root words to their various forms). Some are words of more than one syllable. These become easier for a child to picture when he has been trained to count the "sound parts" in a word and to picture a vowel for each part. Still other words belong to the category of what have been called "service words."<sup>3</sup> This group includes articles, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, and the forms of the verb "to be." It constitutes the natural basic vocabulary for a spelling program. Natural too is the very process of learning these words if the teaching of spelling is done by means of writing experience. The very frequency of their use enables the child to learn these words without special study. The more that progress is made in grouping words according to the best method of tackling them, and teaching is done accordingly, the better will children be able to develop a broadly conceived ability to spell.

#### Summary

1. A three-point methodological bond between the teaching of reading and the teaching of spelling is desirable. Meaningful presentation, attention to individual

<sup>3</sup>E. W. Dolch, "The Use of Vocabulary Lists," *Elementary English*, XXVI, (March, 1949), 146.

differences, and the development of a general ability are as important in spelling as they are in reading.

2. Spelling experience gained by creative story writing with individual vocabularies assures that the words being learned are important to the individual child. Furthermore, it probably develops general spelling ability just as well as does practice in the spelling of an artificially imposed common spelling vocabulary.

3. The natural common vocabularies are (1) "service words," and (2) the vocabularies involved in classroom learnings such as natural and social science. An unrelated list of words is an artificial vocabulary which, if taught, must be taught apart from purposeful writing situations.

4. If our aim is general spelling ability, we will be less concerned with which particular words are taught and more concerned with grouping all words according to the techniques by which they may best be tackled.

5. If our concern is general spelling ability, maximum attention to individual differences becomes possible and spelling does not become divorced from its true purpose, the purpose of conveying meaning.

# The Development of Thinking and of Concepts

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## *Introductory*

For some time educators from different fields of study have discussed semantics and the adult's interpretation of such involved concepts as "communism," "nationalism," "democracy," "capitalism," and "loyalty." They have realized that differences in interpreting such words arise from differences in background, education, and experience and that attempts to define them objectively usually lead to emotional disturbance and end in violent disagreement. They have realized also that people cannot write and speak clearly and intelligently unless they can read with accurate interpretation; and if they cannot express their opinions to their representatives in the government, our democratic way of living is threatened.

Until recently, however, little attention was paid to the confusion a child feels when he encounters words with numerous and diverse meanings. English teachers had explained differences between literal and figurative meanings of words in such expressions as,

vines which greened the warm hills  
tragedy had folded her mantle about this  
affair  
whose image had peopled her dreams  
drawing up sorrow from old wells

But other teachers were not usually aware that many common English words have several meanings and some have numerous meanings. They did not realize the confusion a child feels when he meets "hatch" in a sentence denoting the opening in the deck of a ship and applies to it the only concept he knows, to bring forth young birds from eggs. Actually the Oxford Dictionary (11) lists 32 definitions and descriptive statements for "hatch," 46 for "shaft," and 107 for "bear," to name only a few words that children meet often. To point out a typical

difficulty, a pre-school child once said, "My foot is a bear" after he had heard his mother talk about his "bare foot."

The importance of semantics, even to primary teachers, is being emphasized so that from the beginning of reading instruction children may interpret spoken and written language more exactly and express themselves more clearly and effectively. Teachers are now beginning to realize that simple recognition of words is not sufficient; children at all levels must be aware of extensiveness of meanings of words and depth or vividness of meanings, as Bond and Bond (3) phrase the three levels of meaning. To be efficient readers, children must learn to think in order to develop varying concepts for the same word and eventually distinguish even between different levels of abstraction, discriminate between referential and emotive language, and recognize and interpret metaphorical language.

How can satisfactory reading instruction not only prevent confusion due to variations in meaning but even motivate pupils to be better students of linguistics? The answer lies in adequate instruction to develop concepts first through teaching teachers about semantics and then by having them teach their pupils to think and speak and write more clearly and more effectively. The same techniques may be used with both teachers and children.

## *Awakening Realization of Variations*

1. The first step is to awaken in children and in teachers a realization that there are variations in meanings of words and that these differences in shades of meanings and in usage may lead to confusion. Begin by emphasizing that meaning exists not in the word alone but

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in the context. Write on the board "bow." Ask the class to pronounce it and define it. There will be several meanings and several ways of pronouncing it. It can mean (1) an ornamental knot in tying a string or ribbon, (2) a rainbow, (3) a weapon used by an archer, (4) a bowman, or archer, (5) anything bent or curved, (6) to bend the head, knee or body, (7) to submit or yield to authority or the wishes of another, (8) the forward part of a vessel or airship, etc. Write "the" in front of "bow." Now some of the above meanings will be eliminated, but there will still be confusion in meanings and in pronunciation. Even "the bright-colored bow" does not clarify the meaning. A whole sentence is necessary for complete interpretation—"I played the violin with a bright-colored bow," or "I shot with a bright-colored bow and arrow," or "He wore a bright-colored bow tie."

2. A similar technique for developing awareness of the significance of the context is to ask the class to give phrases or sentences showing variations in the meaning of simple words, instead of definitions. Responses like these, for "run"

a home run in baseball  
a run in her stocking  
he runs fast  
my nose is running  
the color in my dress ran

will be given quickly. After some hesitation others will add:

the play had a long run  
he held a run of spades  
a vine runs up the side of the house  
he had a close run in the election  
he runs a hotel  
his memory runs far back

Then the instructor may add others like these:

the line runs east  
the tune is running in my mind  
a sheep run  
in the long run  
to have the run of the house  
the train had a long run to New York

his tongue runs on  
he ran his firm into debt  
his horse ran third in the race  
the iron melted and ran  
he ran the rumor to its source  
he ran a nail into his foot

and many others. The Oxford Dictionary (11) lists 384 definitions and descriptive phrases for the word "run."

3. The instructor may also use pictures to show variations in word meanings. Illustrations like those in *The Play-Book of Words* (8) are an excellent means of leading pupils into "a fascinating study of words and their shades of meaning," as the author states his purpose. These illustrations depict variations like the head of a horse, head of a hammer, head of a barrel, head of a nail, head of a match, head of the class, head of cabbage, head of a broom, and head of an arrow. Stories, explanations, and puzzles in this book also teach children to think while developing interest in varying meanings of words. For example, "What has arms but no hands and fingers, legs but no feet and toes?" (Answer: chair)

4. Classes or individuals may make picture books or picture dictionaries showing different connotations of words, as with "about":

he walked about a mile  
the story was about a dog  
he ran about in the room  
he faced about  
turn about is fair play  
he is well and able to be about again  
I'll meet you about this time tomorrow.

Differences in prepositions and adverbs are sometimes more difficult to explain but easier to illustrate, or vice versa.

5. Pupils may collect and bring to class advertisements, jokes, or cartoons, which depend upon a second meaning of the words, not the usual or literal meaning. The advertisements for a certain brand of beer show two pictures of different objects represented by the same word, as—crane as an animal and as an im-

plement for lifting weights. Advertisements for electric ranges use the words "It's matchless," meaning "without comparison" and "without a match for lighting it." Advertisements for gasoline and oil for automobiles usually contain two meanings. Recently in the comics when a man said to his young daughter, "Dog is man's best friend," she replied, "You mean they don't like ladies?" After he had straightened out her thinking, he added, "The dog is our favorite dumb animal" but she quickly answered, "He's not dumb. He does clever tricks."

Cartoons of *The Man Who* salted away his money, made an awful racket, threw cold water on the deal, and slept like a top, picture these actions in their literal sense. Another cartoon showed a man shouting to a newspaper editor, "What's the idea saying in this article that I was dancing with grace and aplomb? Now my wife's got detectives on my trail." A joke heard recently on the radio told of three men inside a silo who wanted to get out and three men outside who wanted to go in, but the silo had no doors or windows. The feat was finally accomplished, because the three men outside kept running about until they were "all in" and the three men inside kept trying until they were "knocked out." But the implication of such jokes, cartoons, and advertising matter is missed if the reader has experienced only one meaning of many commonly used words.

More serious reading matter or radio comments may also lead pupils to reading or listening more attentively. Pupils may bring in statements like "a bumper crop of babies," or "to climb to new heights in the art he graces so well," or "A person has to be somewhat of a contortionist these days to get by. He's got to keep his back to the wall and his ear to the ground. Then he's expected to put his shoulder to the wheel, his nose to the grindstone, keep a level head and both feet on the ground. And

at the same time, look for the silver lining with his head in the clouds."

### *Developing Sensitiveness to Word Meanings*

1. These techniques have relied on classroom discussion and hit-or-miss search for variations in meanings of words. More scientific procedures are needed to insure semantic emphasis in reading instruction and develop more exact understanding of words in general. A teacher may begin by showing why knowledge of words is important, such as "Efficient reading will bring you a better job, make your work easier, save you time, give you something pleasant to do in that enormous amount of spare time with which the future both promises and threatens you, and finally, give you the social ease that will make you comfortable in almost any group of people." (5) or "Instead of giving him long lists of unrelated words, we have given him the tools for improving himself. While lists of words may be forgotten, word-learning habits once cultivated, remain." (6)

2. Next the teacher must attempt to provide first-hand experiences to supply new words or vaguely understood words with their correct interpretation. Young children may visit community stores, airports, museums, and art galleries to formulate exact impressions; older children may, in addition, use scientific experiments, hobbies and construction work to experience and develop new interests and thus enrich their vocabularies.

3. When first-hand experiences are impossible or impractical, the teacher may use audio-visual aids like pictures, charts, graphs, maps, slides, radio, televisions, etc., to help pupils convert reading symbols into accurate thought units. These will help pupils differentiate between the pilot of an airplane and the pilot light on a gas stove; a strike in baseball and a strike in the coal mines; a bolt for a door and a bolt of lightning; a table as a

piece of furniture and a statistical table; a clap of thunder and the clapping of the audience; the capital in a bank, a capital letter, the capital of a state, and capital versus labor; backing a car into the garage, backing a community project, backing a rug with wool; and many other terms with several meanings that may cause confusion.

4. To develop in children greater appreciation of the relationship of words, the teacher must use specific procedures for teaching children to think and to build accurate concepts. Contextual clues should be stressed because they will be most useful and most often used throughout life. In the following sentences "cygnet" is a strange term:

The fluffy little cygnets swam in a straight line, one behind the other. At the head of the line was their mother, a large white swan.

But the other words help a young reader decide that "cygnets" are young swans. The teacher may make up similar sentences or choose them from textbooks.

1. The pilot wore a *helmet* to protect his head.
2. He hid the book in an *obscure* part of the library.
3. The lion was in a bad temper. He had not eaten all day and he was still wet from his fall in the river.  
It was not a very *propitious* time for a mouse to ask a favor.

Thus the surrounding words help the child interpret the meaning of the italicized words in each instance.

5. When contextual clues fail to aid interpretation, the child should learn to refer to the dictionary for accurate understanding. In the case of "quick" in the sentence, "He was cut to the quick by your statement," the pupil will find several meanings of "quick" as an adjective, an adverb, and a noun. He will try several definitions in this sentence until he comes to "sensitive living flesh, as to cut a fingernail to

the quick; hence, a vital part," which seems closely related but is still not the exact meaning intended by the writer or speaker. The classroom teacher must now help the pupil realize that the statement is figurative, not literal, i.e. he was not actually cut to the quick of his fingernail, but he was affected deeply or wounded in spirit by the statement. Children will also need help in finding the appropriate dictionary definition for such expressions as:

had to leave town under a cloud  
beads of perspiration  
a rent in her skirt  
the people waxed impatient  
the thick of the fight

In dictionary practice the teacher must make sure pupils do not always transfer definitions into their statements in the same word order used in the definitions in the dictionary, as in the sentence above, "He hid the book in an obscure part of the library." The pupil will try these definitions: (1) difficult to understand, (2) hidden from sight, (3) not easily seen. When the pupil rewords the sentence, he must change the order to "in a part of the library hidden from sight."

6. The teacher may use exercises based on derivation of words to point out terms coming from similar roots but having slightly different meanings.

"Dictator" comes from a Latin word, "dicere," "to say."

It means the "sayer"—the one who "says" what everyone else shall do, or not do—whose word is law.

Fill in these blanks with words formed from the same root:

I will——— the notes to my secretary.

I acted according to the——— of my conscience.

Government control by one man is a———.

He thinks he can——— the laws of the land.

In a totalitarian state no one may question the power of the———.

7. To explain variations in meanings of words, teachers may use exercises like these:

(a) From the column at the right choose the word that best defines the term "guard" in each of these sentences. Then write the number of that definition in front of the sentence.

—There was a guard of honor for the general.

1. defend

—Guard against colds by keeping clean.

2. protect

—Soldiers were left to guard the city.

3. escort

—John was not on guard when his opponent struck.

4. a player

—The wire guard on the walk kept the people off the wet cement.

5. in position

—Our neighbor is a guard on the team.

6. screen

(b) There are several meanings for "band" in these sentences. Mark only the sentences in which "band" means a group of people.

1. I saw a band of gypsies on the road.
2. His watch band was pure gold.
3. A band of light shone through the window.
4. A band of robbers stole the horses.
5. The shepherd band started to cross the desert.

(c) Explain the meaning of "settle" in each of these sentences.

1. The shepherds decided to settle in that valley.
2. I need ten dollars to settle the bill.
3. We saw the ship settle in the mud.
4. Can you settle this argument?

8. Teachers may also point out words similar in appearance and in pronunciation that may cause confusion.

(a) Underline the correct word in each sentence.

1. He was not (eligible, legible) for membership in that group.
2. The clerk sold the (costumer, cus-

tommer) a (suit, suite) of clothes.

3. Put the (flour, flower) in a vase on the (mantel, mantle).

4. We may choose either (cereal, serial) for breakfast.

(b) In some of these sentences the word "scarce" is incorrect and has been confused with some other word similar in appearance and in pronunciation. Write the correct form at the end of the incorrect sentences.

1. Meat was scarce during the war

2. The explosion gave him a terrible scarce.

3. When water became scarce, the people moved away.

4. He had deep scarce on his face.

5. They continued to scarce at me.

9. As children achieve higher levels of mental maturity and progress through the secondary level, teachers must help them interpret simple terms used as figures of speech, or as classical allusions, as:

lips like rubies, teeth like pearls  
she has seen sixteen summers  
the Waves to sleep had gone  
All the world's a stage  
Good luck knocks at his door  
a child wrapped in the arms of Morpheus  
cold from her haunt—a Naiad slim.

Children will need systematic guidance to identify and interpret these unusual expressions so that they may acquire real pleasure from reading these niceties of composition and become extensive and efficient readers as adults.

### *Acquainting Teachers with Actual Difficulties*

1. Finally, teachers should be acquainted with the research showing the difficulties children have when they meet unusual meanings of known words or strange words. Investigations of children's concepts by Lacey, (7) Meltzer, (9) Gibbs, (4) Ordan, (12) Strouse, (15) and others indicate that ideas that seem com-



mon to adults are not understood or only vaguely understood by children at the elementary level. Russell (13) states, however, that these studies suggest that teachers cannot rely upon their pupils' understanding of a particular word, but they also indicate, more hopefully, that pupils grow rather continuously in their true understanding of concepts and that school programs can foster such understanding.

Semantic counts of words like that led by Thorndike and Lorge (17) and begun in 1934 should be familiar to all teachers. A less extensive semantic count made by Thompson (16) showed that, in the eight primers she studied, 97 words had from two to fourteen meanings. A semantic study of several pre-primers published by seven publishing companies within the past three years was just completed under the writer's supervision. This investigation showed that, in the first pre-primers, ten words had two meanings and one word, "play," had three meanings; in the second pre-primers, thirty-one words had two meanings and four words three meanings; in the third pre-primers 139 words had two meanings, 13 had three meanings and four had four or more meanings. In the fourth pre-primer (of only one series) twenty-seven words had two meanings and ten had three meanings. Of course, many of these meanings are repeated from book to book, but teachers must be on the alert to prevent confusion before it can arise in the minds of these young readers.

In the writer's (1) own dissertation for the doctoral degree, a study of two books of tenth grade difficulty (18) showed that 1,291 of the 5,095 words tabulated had two or more meanings; the number of different meanings varied from two meanings for 676 of those words to 25 meanings for the word "made."

2. Teachers may also make semantic counts of textbooks they use daily, as many graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh are doing. The analysis involves careful reading to

determine whether each word on the pages selected or each word on every page may have more than one meaning. Words and their contexts are then recorded on cards, thus:

| CARRY — 1 <sup>1</sup>  |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Here, carry Melissa."  | 281-21-251-231 <sup>2</sup> |
| 2. to learn to carry off the toga   | 119                         |
| 3. was carried to a conclusion  | 338-343                     |
| 4. by carrying off Helen  | 1                           |
| 5. epidemics which carried off whole families   | 168                         |
| 6. carried out their intention  | 267-101-121                 |
| 7. to carry on the siege  | 291-331                     |
| 8. Chloe insisting upon the longer carry  | 265                         |
| Explanation:  |                             |
| <sup>1</sup> the index number in Thorndike's Word List  |                             |
| <sup>2</sup> pages on which that meaning occurs in <i>Helmet and Spear</i> and in <i>The Forgotten Daughter</i> . |                             |

These cards are kept by the teachers and duplicates are kept at the Reading Laboratory of the University of Pittsburgh. Eventually publishers or authors may supply lists of words with their varying meanings on their respective pages as they now furnish lists of new terms in each book. Then the classroom teacher will be on the alert to make certain that no child believes that the Indians were "cut down the middle" when the history text states "the number of Indians was cut in two," as one girl expressed her definition. Just recently an undergraduate in the College explained Bar Association as a group of bartenders.

3. Tests of various types are also useful in making teachers realize children's difficulties with vocabulary. Standardized or teacher-made tests may be used. Either type may test children's knowledge of synonyms, antonyms, prefixes, suffixes, etc. Teacher-made tests have the

advantage of containing terms taken from the regular textbooks used in class. Graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh have used two comparative informal tests to determine how well their pupils understood printed matter. The first test consisted of defining the italicized word in each of 45 or 50 statements selected at random, thus:

1. The wasps will *light* on the jam.
2. If you say magic words, the people stick *fast*.
3. Tom *drew* a picture of a woodpecker.
4. I'll *run* the elevator.
5. Magic words made the load seem *light*.
6. Elephants *drew* the big truck out of the sand.
7. I won't *stand* for it.

Historical, geographical, arithmetical, or scientific terms like "treaty," "latitude," "longitude," "triangle," etc., were not used, as it was assumed that these would have been "taught" by the teacher. One week later without any explanation or discussion about the first test, a matching test was given using the same statements but placing them in groups of 10 or 15 items in the left-hand column with additional items in each group in the right-hand column containing the teacher's definitions of the underlined terms. All children seemed to find the definitions test more difficult than the matching test. Most of the children attempted all matching items but not all the items to be defined. Girls scored higher than boys on both tests in almost all classes, though the differences between the median scores on both tests was not always statistically significant. The teachers who composed and administered these tests concluded that their pupils: (1) did not understand the common terms they meet in their textbooks, although many understood the more technical language; (2) cannot write their own definitions so easily as they can match terms defined by teachers; (3) did not understand shifts in meaning, especially in figurative language; (4) need broader knowledge of

words in all phases; and (5) need different types of tests to test understanding of semantic variations.

4. Other excellent suggestions for developing interest in vocabulary and making teachers and pupils aware of concepts, levels of abstraction and generalization, shifts of meaning, figurative language, referential and emotive languages were given by Nila Banton Smith (14) and Emmett Albert Betts (2) in the May 1949 issue of *Education*.

### Conclusion

As teachers become more aware of the confusion that arises in children's minds from varying meanings of commonly used words and learn to anticipate and overcome those difficulties, they will help children become more observant in reading and become more interested in language itself. For children will go more readily to the classroom dictionary and eventually to the larger library dictionary to search for additional variations in meaning, if teachers use appropriate and satisfying techniques. Gradually even average and dull students may learn to enjoy using their dictionary training. Then pupils will no longer feel frustrated and discard a book as "too hard" if they meet with many unusual meanings of the most commonly used words in the early pages of a book. Occurrence of too many meanings for individual words and of too many words with variant meanings which aren't completely interpreted by pupils may well be one of the stumbling blocks which cause children to become "reading problems" or at least to read only when forced. Perhaps this is the most important reason why pupils fail in reading. Awareness of semantics and ability to interpret shades of meaning of words should lead both teachers and children to more intelligent thinking, clearer expression, and to keener observation and greater pleasure in reading. This, in turn, will result in increased achievement in school work and better adjustment as citizens in the future.

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# Look and Listen

Edited by RAOUL R. HAAS<sup>1</sup>

The first National Broadcasting Company Summer Radio Institute will begin on June 25 at Barnard College and will continue until August 3. It will be held in the New York NBC studios and the instructors will be department heads of the NBC. Thirty-five students will be admitted to the Institute and both men and women are eligible for admission. The course will provide professional training for young college graduates preparing to enter the radio and television fields and will give additional training to personnel now seeking advancement. A certificate will be given by Barnard and NBC to students fulfilling the Institute requirements.

This is the fourth Summer Radio Institute conducted by NBC and colleges and universities. The Institute at Northwestern University in Chicago is the oldest of the cooperative arrangements and institutes are held annually in California, one at U.C.L.A. and one at Stanford in Palo Alto.

A folder describing the NBC-Barnard Summer Radio Institute may be had by writing NBC, Public Affairs Division, New York 20.

## ***New Instructional Materials in Reading***

1. *It's Fun to Find Out*, a series of eight paper-bounds books, by Paul Witty and the educational research staff of Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., is now being published by D. C. Heath and Co. Each is based on a sound motion picture produced and distributed by EBFilms, Wilmette, Illinois, and is illustrated with attractive, unusual photographs from the film. Simple enough for first or second grade children, these books are diverse in content and will interest boys and girls of varying age levels. A short question and review section concludes each book. Though of particular value when used in conjunction with the films,

the books by themselves provide important additions to children's reading.

*Three Little Kittens*, *Gray Squirrel*, *Shep—the Farm Dog*, and *Farm Animals* describe the daily activities and habits of animals that all children know and love. *The Fireman*, *The Mailman*, *The Food Store*, and *A Day at the Fair* provide interesting background material about people, places, and events which are part of every child's life.

For further information, write D. C. Heath and Co., Boston, or their regional offices.

2. *Library Organization*, a one reel, sound, color (\$100) or black and white (\$50), film is now available through Coronet Films, Chicago 1. Intended for junior and senior high school as well as college and adult audiences, this film was produced with Alice Lohrer, Assistant Professor of Library Science at the University of Illinois as educational collaborator.

High school and college students are expected to have a certain basic knowledge of the organization of the libraries they use, but this basic knowledge is not enough for really efficient use of the library. A more detailed understanding of library organization, as shown by this film, speeds up work in the library and makes for better studying and better use of study time. By explaining the card cataloging system and the Dewey Decimal System in use in one typical library, the film provides students with the means for making their libraries convenient and easy-to-use treasure-houses of information.

3. An introductory filmstrip on the use of the library aimed at junior and senior high school students is *Use Your Library*, produced

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Haas is Director, the North Side Branch, Chicago Teachers College.



and distributed by the American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago 11.

The strip contains 77 frames, b&w, 35mm., (\$5), and is intended to develop a favorable attitude toward the library. It shows realistically what the school library offers and tells how to use it. Three sections:

- a. How to Find Books,
- b. How to Find Brief Facts, and,
- c. How to Find Magazine Articles and Pamphlets,

familiarize the student with the card catalog, encyclopedias, and other general reference works, the *Reader's Guide*, and the pamphlet file, and encourage their use.

*Use Your Library* is planned for use by both teachers and librarians without a manual or study guide. It was prepared by E. Ben Evans, supervisor of library services, and William A. Dennis, instructor in photography, Kern County Union High School District, Bakersfield, California.

4. *It's Fun to Read Books*, one reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50). One of the greatest problems confronting teachers is that of arousing students' interest in the many aspects of reading. This film is aimed at developing an attitude in younger students that will lead to habits which are essential to the enjoyment of reading. Where do we get the books we want? How should we take care of books? How do we get fun from books? These are some of the typical questions raised and answered by this motion picture. Alice Lohrer is educational collaborator; Coronet the producer.

5. For intermediate grades and junior high school is Coronet's new *Literature Appreciation: English Lyrics*, one reel, sound, color (\$100) or b&w (\$50).

This motion picture will give students a new means of appreciation and understanding of the works of Tennyson, Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, Shakespeare, and other English poets,

by its translation of their works through the medium of the motion picture. The best in lyric language is presented here against the actual English scenes as the poets saw them—the Shropshire country as Alfred Housman knew it; the surf at Dover Beach where Matthew Arnold walked; the magic of an English spring as Robert Browning dreamed of it from abroad. Irving Garwood, Professor of English at Western Illinois State College, is educational collaborator.

6. Six films on great American writers, each 2 reels, 16mm, b&w, are available through Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois. The purchase price is \$85 per subject.

a. *Washington Irving*. The author of *Rip Van Winkle*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and the *Knickerbocker History* is brought to life again in this intimate cinematic recording of the first American to receive worldwide recognition as a man of letters. Irving's life as a lawyer, and a writer, his travels and his life abroad are all revealed. Leon Howard of Northwestern University is the educational collaborator.

b. *James Fenimore Cooper*. Cooper, the man who gave the world *The Spy*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Deerslayer* and other immortal works, produced the first great American novels of the frontier scene. The forces that created his work and life are vividly reenacted in this film. Collaborator is Robert E. Spiller of the University of Pennsylvania.

c. *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*. The teacher, scholar, and "children's poet" comes to life again in this film. Longfellow the man and the poet, his successes and his tragedies are powerfully shown. Harvard's Howard M. Jones is educational collaborator.

d. *John Greenleaf Whittier*. Cecil B. Williams, of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, served as collaborator for this film revealing the life of one of America's most beloved poets and strongest abolitionists. It

traces his association with William Lloyd Garrison, follows his work as student and editor and advocate of social reform, and finally shows him in his declining years when he wrote some of his best loved poems.

e. *Louisa May Alcott*. This film portrays the life of one of America's great and popular women writers, revealing her complete devotion to family, her service as a nurse in the Civil War and her fight for national reform. Her success as a writer of human interest stories is emphasized. The noted biographer of Miss Alcott, Madeleine B. Stern, serves as educational collaborator.

f. *Oliver Wendell Holmes*. Dramatized episodes from Holmes' life reveal the reasons for his leadership in America's cultural history. Done in collaboration with Mentor L. Williams

of the Illinois Institute of Technology, this film shows Holmes' eminence as a writer, his genial personality, his broad perspective and his intolerance of dogmatism.

These films are recommended for use in junior and senior high school social studies and language arts classes, and for adult groups. Also available through EBFilms are five films on American explorers and nine on American statesmen.

7. The first of a series of children's record albums based on TV's "Mr. I. Magination" series has recently been released by Columbia Records. Entitled *Mr. I. Magination Meets Rip Van Winkle*, the album stars Paul Tripp in his usual role of "Mr. I." The story and lyrics were written by Tripp and the album is colorfully illustrated by Sy Frankel.

### CURRICULUM MATERIALS IN THE LANGUAGE ARTS

(Continued from Page 262)

#### *Miscellaneous Language Arts*

Des Moines, Iowa. *Journalism for Secondary Schools*. State Department of Public Instruction, 1950.

Houston, Texas. *Speech I—IV*. Houston Public Schools, 1951. 56 p.

Covers the work of the usual speech work in secondary schools: fundamentals of speech, public speaking, debate I and II, and Dramatics I and II. Unusually thorough and covers every aspect of the speech work with meticulous care.

Los Angeles, California. *Speech in the Elementary School*. Los Angeles Public Schools, 1949. Sacramento, California. *Handbook for Teachers of Manuscript Writing in Grades 1 and 2*. Sacramento Public Schools, 1949. 18 p.

Places emphasis upon the *method* of teach-

ing manuscript writing to beginning school children. Does not attempt to study research relative to the advantages and disadvantages of manuscript writing.

Schenectady, New York. *Spelling—A Tool in Functional Writing*. Schenectady Public Schools, 1950. 8 p. Mimeographed.

Uses the true test of spelling ability as how well a child spells what ever he writes. Presents methods and techniques for insuring that by the time a child leaves elementary school he has developed and maintained a positive attitude toward spelling; that he can write more common words with ease and accuracy; that he is secure in his ability to face new words; that he senses its value as a way of sharing his information.

# The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS<sup>1</sup>

"One Magazine is not Enough," by Laura K. Martin, in *Social Education*, December, 1950.

This article contains good material for teachers, who, while they are giving more time to magazine reading and reference work in their classrooms, are not always assuring themselves that a *rich* and *varied* magazine fare is being provided.

Many magazines are offering highly attractive quantity subscriptions which too often result in an entire class reading the same magazine. This is a greater evil than the class using a single text, Miss Martin points out, for "magazines and leaflets, however well edited, do not grow out of the ordered study of one subject over a period of years" as do the best texts. A variety of views, such as a picture of United Nations activities by both the *United Nations Bulletin*, an official publication, and the *United Nations World* are necessary if the pictures in the students' minds are to be clear.

Before a teacher uses magazines in her classroom, according to Dr. Martin, she should be familiar with the common aids and guides: *Reader's Guide* and Ayer's and Ulrich's periodical indexes, to mention only two. Mott's *History of American Magazines*, and Wood's *Magazines in the United States* discuss the history and merits of many magazines. Lesser known, but very useful, are two American Library Association publications: *Standard Catalog for High Schools*, which contains a list of magazines, and *Top of the News*, published quarterly by the Division of Libraries for Children and Young People, which includes notes on new magazines or changes in old ones. The ALA booklists for junior and senior high schools also contain annotated magazine lists.

Magazines themselves, such as *Scholastic*, *Atlantic Monthly*, and *Survey*, often discuss the

role of magazines on the American scene, Dr. Martin points out. In judging and selecting magazines for the classroom, the teacher's best bet often is the school librarian.



"Children's Interest in Free Reading," by S. M. Amatora and S. M. Edith, in *School and Society*, Mar. 3, 1951.

A survey of studies of reading interest studies in the past sixty years, with emphasis on the past three decades. These generalizations are among those which may be drawn from the article:

1. Physical make-up-size, color, print—influence reading choices of primary grade pupils.
2. Teachers' preferences influence pupils' choices.
3. Free reading programs and availability of books widen reading interests, but mere accessibility does not insure recreational reading.
4. Motion pictures shape reading interests and tastes.
5. Girls read more than boys according to eleven studies; one investigation found the opposite to be true.
6. Two studies found that girls often read boys' books but that boys are not interested in girls' books.
7. Sex differences appear at about nine or ten. That boys have more diverse reading interests, that girls' choices are homogeneous, and that girls are more enthusiastic readers than boys are supported, both pro and con, by studies.
8. Boys read more newspapers and magazines than do girls, but girls patronize the public library more.

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Jenkins is Assistant in English Education at the University of Illinois.

9. Eight studies found that adventure leads all topics in interest for boys, girls are interested in fiction; one study disagrees with this, finding a higher rating for novel and love stories for boys than for girls. Girls prefer fictitious characters while boys prefer them real. However, one study found that girls have a great interest in biography, while another finds that they do not like history and biography as well as boys do.

10. The comic section is most popular among boys; girls lean to adult fiction earlier than do boys. Girls are more interested in humor than boys, while boys have a greater preference for action stories.

11. As to methods used to investigate children's reading, the authors found these to be common: the questionnaire, among children themselves or from their parents; through study of library withdrawals; a study of time spent in the library; and, records of reading kept by the children themselves.

12. A final finding of the study indicates the shift of area of interest through the grades: For boys: grades 2, 3, 4, and 7 - children; grades 5, 6, and 8 - adventure. For girls: grades 2-6 - children; 7 - people; 8 - adventure.



Elementary teachers who have difficulties in teaching spelling to their pupils, and pupils who do not find *rime* or reason in the way in which our words are spelled, may find hope in the work of the Simpler Spelling Association. Scholars have long recognized the difficulties that both groups face but for just as long a time they have been without a means of circumventing them. Here are some of the illogicalities, as pointed out by Dr. Ralph D. Owen, President of the association in a recent address before the Educational Press Association of America:

1. Under the present system no help can be got from phonetics since we never know how to pronounce a word until somebody tells us and then we are not sure that he knows.

2. The letter "A," for example has forty-seven different sound associations.

3. In Germany, Sweden, or Turkey a child can learn to read, write, and spell at the same time because every letter has one sound and every sound is invariably represented by the same letter or combination of letters.

4. English has: single or double consonants; silent letters; duplicate consonants; 17 vowel sounds represented by 5 vowels and combinations, and the combinations number 300.

5. The language has grown and changed but the spelling has remained constant through attempting to show the history of words and to indicate the present pronunciation.

Since its founding in 1930 the Simpler Spelling Society of Great Britain and the Simpler Spelling Association of America have based their proposals on the application of frequency count to the representation of English sounds. Under the system determined in this basis each sound is consistently and invariably represented by that letter or combination of letters which has represented it most frequently in our traditional spelling.

Under the Simpler Spelling Association's system of sounds the first two paragraphs of Lincoln's *Gettysburg Address* would be written in this manner:

Forskor and sevn yearz agoe our faadherz braut forth on dhis kontinent a nue naeshun, konseevd in liberti, and dedikaeted to dhe propozishum dhat aul men are kreeaeted

Nou we are en-gaejd in a great sivil wor, testing whedher dhat naeshun, or eni naeshun soe konseevd and soe dedikaeted, kan long enduer. We are met on a graet batlfeeld ov dhat wor. We hav kum to dedikaet a porshun ov



dhat feeld az a fienal resting-plaes for dhoez hoo heer gaev dhaer lievz dhat naeshun miet liv. It iz aultogedher fiting and proper dhat we shuud doo dhis.



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of May, 1951:

For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *Three Boys and a Lighthouse*, by Nan Hayden Agle and Ellen Wilson. Scribner's, \$2.00.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *Ghost Town Cowboy*, by Genevieve Eames. Messner, \$2.50.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Francie*, by Emily Hahn. Franklin Watts, \$2.50.

For older boys, 12 to 16 years of age: *Avalanche Patrol*, by Montgomery M. Atwater. Random House, \$2.50.



"Teaching Pupils to Think," by John H. Treanor, in *The Packet*, Feb. 1951. Teachers too often think that their pupils do not know how to think. That they are wrong, according to Mr. Treanor, is evidenced by the fact that among fourth-grade pupils, pupils can be found who are able to give the names and characteristics of all the "big league" players, discuss the merits of various radio and television programs, and are familiar with the armed services personnel and material. Their vocabulary is often extensive and accurate. But because of the teachers' feeling the pupils, too, come to think that they cannot think. They have the resources, frequently, but do not know how to use them. Through using "familiar situations" where the pupils have a chance to show what they know about topics such as "Baseball," "Rain," or "Armistice Day" in daily exercises Mr. Treanor was able to teach his pupils that there are things in this world to feel and taste and smell, as

well as to hear and to see, and to show them that the familiar reply, "But I don't have anything to write about," is not based on actuality. They were made conscious of the fact that to write power would come through putting their five senses to work. For the teacher, also, the problem of teaching expression was made easier by solving the prior problem of getting pupils to think.



The National Conference on Research in English has announced the results of its annual election of officers, conducted by mail among its membership. For the year 1951-1952 the new officers are: President, John J. DeBoer, University of Illinois; Vice-President, Roy I. Johnson, University of Denver; Secretary-treasurer, Gertrude Whipple, Wayne University. Professor DeBoer succeeds Professor Edgar Dale, of Ohio State University. The National Conference was founded in 1932.

Distribution of the 1951 Research Bulletin to the members has been announced also. The Bulletin is entitled, *The Interpretation of Language: An Essential of Understanding*, and was edited by Dean J. C. Seegers of Temple University. It will be available to the general public May 1, from the office of the National Council of Teachers of English, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago 21.



The U. S. Civil Service Commission has announced that there is still an urgent need for elementary teachers in the Indian Service. The Commission announced an examination for Elementary Teacher in June 1950, but to date sufficient qualified candidates have not been recruited. The jobs pay \$3100 a year. Applicants will not be required to take a written examination.

Information and applications may be obtained from most first and second-class post offices, from Civil Service regional offices, or

from the U. S. Civil Service Commission, Washington 25, D. C.



Elementary teachers may find the February and March issues of *Childhood Education* interesting, helpful reading. The March issue is concerned with the general topic, "We Solve Problems," while the February issue has the theme, "We Improve Communication."

The issue on "problem-solving" raises the question of whether the child's problems are his or actually are ours, and then discusses these problems as found at the nursery, kindergarten, primary, and intermediate levels. The wide gulf between life's ideals and practices as a disturbing factor in the complicated process of the child's growing up is discussed and analyzed with merit.

The February issue probes the rather formal word, "communication," and shows what it means to all of us in our complex civilization. The communication media are exposed to the glare of the spotlight, conversation as a lost art and speech as an index of maturity are briefly but thoroughly discussed. Communication through all of the arts, through reading and through recordings are given short essays. Appropriately enough, experience—as the source of communication—is given the final "say" in the issue. In this article illustrations are drawn from actual school situations in which a class excursion, a school project, or a shared home activity have inspired lively experiences in communications.



*Creative Reading* by Helen Rand Miller and John J. DeBoer is mentioned here because of its general appeal as an aid in building reading power, with emphasis on *reading for meaning*. Designed as "A Manual for High School and Junior College Students," *Creative Reading* is written in a sprightly and popular style. Besides

being of help to all language arts teachers by adding to their fund of concepts about this skill, *Creative Reading* will be found by many to be interesting reading in its own right. Copies may be ordered from the Graessle-Mercer Co., Seymour, Ind. Price \$.75 each or \$.60 for 10 or more.



Nominations for officers of the National Council of Teachers of English for the year 1951-1952 are as follows:

President: Lennox Grey, Chairman, Department of the Teaching of English and Foreign Languages, Teachers College, Columbia University

First Vice-President: Harlen M. Adams, Executive Dean, Chico State Teachers College, Chico, California

Second Vice-President: Helen K. Mackintosh, Office of Education, Washington, D. C.

Secretary-Treasurer: W. Wilbur Hatfield, 211 West 68th Street, Chicago 21, Illinois

Directors-at-Large (Six to be Elected):

J. W. Ashton, Dean, College of Arts and Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

Althea Beery, Supervisor of Primary Grades, Cincinnati Public Schools, Cincinnati, Ohio

Marie D. Bryan, Assistant Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland

Inez Frost, The Hutchinson Junior College, Hutchinson, Kansas

Lou LaBrant, School of Education, New York University, Washington Square, New York

Irvin C. Poley, Germantown Friends School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## Editorial

A number of promising solutions have been proposed for the problem of the comic book. One of them, developed notably by the Children's Books Committee of the Madison, Wisconsin, Public Schools, has been to frankly recognize the existence of comic books and to assist children in developing critical standards for their evaluation. Boys and girls in the Madison schools, after examining many types of comic books in the classroom, classified them into such categories as "Informational," "Entertaining," "Super-Thrilling," and "Undesirable." The Children's Books Committee then published a bulletin listing these comic books, under the title *Fun for All and All for Fun: Books for "Comics Fans."* The list is annotated and classified by age groups.

Another method, advocated by Paul Witty and others, is to provide an abundance of high-grade reading materials which have strong appeal to children. Although these materials are intended to compete with the comic books, their use need not interfere with the procedure employed in Madison schools, which also stress the wide use of the best children's books. Children like comic books because they are colorful and pictorial, and because they possess the elements of humor and adventure. In recent years, attractive, skilfully written children's books possessing these appeals have appeared in great abundance. Miss Carr's articles in this and in the preceding issue of *Elementary English* contain excellent suggestions for the choice of books which are especially adapted to compete with the comics.

One of the difficulties involved in the use of the second method is the high cost of children's books. Many children's books, even slight ones, sell for \$1.50 or \$2.00 or more. Considering the relatively limited sale of individual titles, publishers, especially in the face of spiralling manufacturing costs, are obliged to establish such rates. The fact remains that these prices are prohibitive for the average boy or girl, and drastically limit the number of books which many schools can buy. Children can buy secondhand comic books for a few pennies each, and have access to others through the interesting process of unlimited exchange. Under such circumstances it should astonish no one that comic books are one of the mass media, while high grade children's books of fiction, biography, travel, science, and the like are circulated only among a minority of boys and girls.

One remedy, of course, is better support for public libraries and systematic efforts on the part of teachers to induce young people to make use of them. Another is to educate the public, boards of education, and school administrators to spend more money on books, which now account for an infinitesimal fraction of school budgets. But the basic problem remains one of making books available directly to boys and girls at prices that they can afford to pay.

Some efforts have already been made to provide good reading materials at low cost. The Cadmus Books have for some time made available many of the finest

(Continued on Page 317)

## Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Charlemae Rollins, Celia B. Stendler, Edward W. Dolch, Elizabeth Guilfoile, Audrey F. Carpenter, Hannah Lindahl, Katherine E. Hodapp, LaTourette Stockwell, Frances E. Whitehead, William A. Jenkins, Jean Gardiner Smith, Edith A. Mathews, Elsie Butler, Margaret S. Skiff, and Frances Rees. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

### For the Teacher

*Understanding Group Behavior of Boys and Girls.* By Ruth Cunningham and Associates, Anna Elzi, James A. Hall, Marie Farrell, and Madeline Roberts. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951.

This volume is a report of a highly significant study undertaken by the Horace Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation of Teachers College, Columbia University. The story is told in a simple, interesting style, with an abundance of illustrations from the elementary classroom. The following chapter titles suggest the nature of the subject matter dealt with: Group Interaction, Group Goals, Group Structure, Group Living and the School Program, Selecting Experiences for Group Living, and Techniques for Studying Group Behavior. While the volume embraces the whole field of social behavior among school children, it has many rich implications for the language arts.

*Studies in Reading.* Publication XXXIV of the Scottish Council for Research in Education. London: University of London Press, 1950.

Presents three graduate theses in Education made in Scotland. The Ph. D. thesis, "Socio-Economic Status and Reading Ability" discovered very marked differences in reading achievement due apparently to home background, but no differences due to teaching method. The B. Ed. thesis on "The Effect of Training on Reading Readiness" shows that

a year in school can produce much improvement on readiness scores. The other B. Ed. thesis on "Children's Leisure Reading Interests" finds that Glasgow children "do not differ in any significant way in their reading interests or habits from children in America." Great use is made in all the studies of American references. E. W. D.

*100 Years of English Literature.* By Sherard Vines. London: Gerald Duckworth, \$3.50.

A running account of the work of English writers from the Romantic period in the early nineteenth century down to 1940. The chapter on children's literature, with its critical comments on Lear, Hughes, Carroll, Dickens, Warner, Alcott, Christine Rossetti, Stevenson, Harris, Doyle, Burnett, Milne, de la Mare, and other English and American authors of children's classics, are of particular interest to readers of this magazine.

*Adventure into Poetry.* By Flora J. Arnstein. Introduction by Hughes Mearns. Stanford University Press, \$3.50.

How does the teacher work with children in terms of creative expression? Out of the richness of a long and thoughtful experience Mrs. Arnstein tells us. This is a book which elementary teachers have long awaited. It is also a book which has much significance for parents.

Let it be hoped that the printing of trite, prosy, imitative, jingling verse, just because children have written it, will cease. Surely the examples of such materials encountered in such quantities in school publications, in the "Children's Corner" of some newspapers, in state anthologies—no less! must represent a low level of adult understanding of the creative child.

Following the publication of Hughes Mearns' first book, *Creative Youth*, in 1926, with its descriptions of the creative process at work in the classroom, and its extraordinary examples



of the creative writing of young people, some teachers everywhere sought to stimulate children to write poetry. The result in general understanding that children can create has been good. There surely have been, however, too many teachers attempting to guide children in the writing of poetry, who know nothing about poetry themselves. This one concludes from the afore-mentioned printed products.

Some teachers have worked with children in a truly creative way, as the much smaller body of genuine poetic expression reveals. But such teachers have not given us too much insight into their procedures. Such teachers are, of course, primarily artists in their own approaches.

Mrs. Arnstein understands children and, moreover, she understands poetry. She has done a wonderful thing for teachers in analyzing her own experience with children who read poetry and wrote poetry with her over a period of years.

She uses the children's own material to show how one child's product may be poetic today, unpoetic tomorrow. She never criticizes. She accepts, and somewhat casually, everything that comes. The children evaluate both their own and each other's work. The author comments:

The children are not blocked in writing by one another's comments, as they would be by those of an adult. . . . They are nearer one another's development in their ability to appraise; their values are not so divergent. Then their dicta do not carry much weight. What they say is not authoritative, and they feel under no obligation to accept one another's standards . . . . Criticism is neither encouraged nor corroborated by me, it is received in a very casual manner, and as there is so much writing continually in progress, no one poem assumes undue importance.

Children, through reading and through writing, learn to know what poetry is. But, it is the joyful, unrestrained, creative process which the author sets before us with such skill and such

amazing and authentic examples of children's writing.

Mrs. Arnstein has made a fine analytical record of her own experience. Let every teacher, parent, "Poetry Corner" editor, and anyone else who ventures to assume the privilege of guiding or encouraging children in their attempts at writing poetry, read what she has to say.

E. G.

### *For Early Adolescents*

*Sir Waler Raleigh, Captain and Adventurer.* By Geoffrey Trease. Vanguard, \$2.50.

An excellent biography for older high school boys and girls full of the swash-buckling adventure and the intrigue of Elizabethan England.

Into the stormy life story of Raleigh, many of the world's most colorful figures are introduced and many of history's most thrilling episodes are presented. The author gives a true picture of the man, showing his faults, his cruelty and his unscrupulous dealings along with his accomplishments. The book ends appropriately with his beheading, but it is not a morbid ending. It shows his great courage.

Throughout the narrative, his great love for his wife and her loyalty to him are themes that make this an inspiring novel as well as an authentic biography.

C. R.

*Trailblazer to Television.* By Terry and Elizabeth M. Korn. Scribner's, \$2.50.

Dr. Arthur Korn was the German scientist who transmitted the first picture by wireless across the Atlantic. This is the story of his early life in Germany and the exciting account of his experiments with what is called phototelegraphy in Europe and facsimile in America. It will be enjoyed by boys who are interested in working in the field of science.

C. R.

*Partners: The United Nations and Youth.* By Eleanor Roosevelt and Helen Ferris. Illustrated with 207 photographs. Doubleday, \$3.00.

Enthralling and instructive are the proper words to describe this explanation of the work of various committees of the UN. The book is a balanced mixture of warm, human, and gripping stories and of informative first-hand accounts. Teen-agers will find the answer to what the UN teams UNICEF, FAO, IRO, WHO, and UNESCO are doing to try to save our world. Adults will find abundant material for refuting claims of the uninformed that the UN is doing little of value. Well-chosen photographs are a valuable supplement. H. M. L.

*The Haunted Hound.* By Robb White. Doubleday, \$2.50.

Robb White has a knack of making perfectly plausible stories with his youthful characters in highly improbable situations, and youngsters are delighted. *The Haunted Hound* runs true to form in this respect.

Jon, stifled by apartment life, and hungry for companionship, ran away to his father's farm, supposedly deserted since his mother's tragic death. As unexpected as the reception he received there was the appearance of a dog named Pot Likker, whom nobody had been able to domesticate. A boy's love for a dog, and a one-man dog's devotion brought out the true greatness of the hound. Action centering around freight-train rides, all-night coon hunts, encounters with a bear and rattlesnakes will make good reading for boys and girls ten to fourteen. It is unfortunate, however, that White allows his characters to use deceit as a normal device in gaining their purposes. F. R.

*Adventure to the Polar Sea.* By Richard S. Lambert. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.75.

This is a biography which should bring back to earth the devotees of science fiction and make them realize the excitement and adventure this planet has been able to afford the resolute pioneer and adventurer. It is the story of the life of Sir John Franklin, the great Arctic explorer, who died in 1847, just after his men had discovered the last link in the great Northwest Passage. Written by the supervisor of

educational broadcasts for the Canadian Broadcasting Company, *Adventure to the Polar Sea* was first published in Canada, where it was chosen by the Canadian Association of Children's Librarians as the outstanding juvenile of 1949 and also won the Governor-General's award for the best Canadian juvenile of the year. It is illustrated from records of the Hudson Bay Company. L. T. S.

*Legends of the North.* By Olivia E. Coolidge. Illustrated by Edouard Sandez. Houghton Mifflin, \$3.00.

This collection of tales from Norse mythology includes most of the familiar ones and some new ones. A table of chief Northern gods explains their relationships, and an introduction helps provide understanding of the ideals of courage and personal prowess that the Norsemen respected.

The telling is direct and unembellished, with few literary touches. There is a consistent quality of vigor in the style, clear print, and black and white illustrations that is in keeping with the exploits of Thor, Beowulf, Loki, and Sigurd. Probably sixth or seventh grade will be the beginning level of reading enjoyment of this book. A. F. C.

*Hetty of the Grande Deluxe.* By Florence Cranell Means. Illustrated by Helen Blair. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50.

Hetty and her parents move from Boulder to a rundown apartment house in Denver. Many of the situations will appeal to girls: overweight Hetty, wanting to be slender, but loving to eat; the clique at school controlling class offices and activities; the poetry reading contest; the difficulty of living the way you believe. J. G. S.

*West Wind.* By Elizabeth Kyle. Illustrated by Berkeley Williams, Jr. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.50.

West Wind is a lonely island off the coast of Scotland. Nigel Finucane, thirteen, his mother, and his cousin Pamela, ten, arrive there unexpectedly out of season to spend a short holi-

day at their summer home. Immediately strange things begin to happen. Before long the children discover that the fisher folk on the island have become involved with a desperate band of black marketers who are smuggling contraband from Ireland on a sailing vessel. In trying to find an old fisherman friend who has been captured by the smugglers, the children get drawn into a series of dangerous adventures, including an unscheduled ocean voyage in the sailing ship. *West Wind* is an excellent adventure story which should satisfy any adolescent's love for mystery and excitement no less because it is healthy and genuinely imaginative rather than cheap and overdrawn. The black and white illustrations give a wonderful feeling of the wind swept beauty and primitiveness of the island.

L. T. S.

*Peddler's Girl*. By Elizabeth Howard. William Morrow, \$2.50.

In 1840 it was not quite the thing for a girl of eighteen to go traveling over the country in a peddler's wagon. Yet, Lucy chose this life for herself and her young brother, Elijah, because Uncle Adam, who drove the painted caravan and traded with the country people, was the relative who meant most to them.

Lucy had grown up in Detroit and she expected to be married to a young man who was making his mark in the town. Out on the open road, however, Lucy encountered many new people and one of them made her question whether she wished to be a city matron, ever.

The heart interest will make this book appeal to adolescent girls. The lightly sketched historical and social background add to the value of the story.

E. G.

*Cocos Gold*. By Ralph Hammond. Harper's, \$2.50.

The adventures of a fifteen year old boy who set out to clear the name of a man wrongly accused of mutiny. Written in the first person, it has something of the immediacy of *Robinson Crusoe*. In its characters and the account of the search for the fabulous treasure of ancient Lima

hidden on Cocos Island, some three hundred miles off the west coast of Costa Rica, it is also reminiscent of *Treasure Island*. A tense, exciting yarn.

L. T. S.

*The Mystery of the Secret Room*. By Enid Blyton. Parkwood Press, \$1.98.

The third in a series of mystery stories about the "Find-Outers" (three boys, two girls, and a dog) who live in an English village near London and have a wonderful time doing amateur detective work in deadly rivalry with Clear-Orf the policeman.

L. T. S.

### For the Middle Grades

*Lucy's League*, by Grace Allen Hogarth. With drawings by Nora Unwin. Harcourt, \$2.50.

When an invitation came to the Edwards family to spend the summer with Granny Gay in America, Lucinda formed a secret society in order to save the passage money for herself and her brother John. How this was accomplished makes an interesting story of English family life. Black and white illustrations by Nora Unwin add to the story.

K. H.

*Pirates, Pirates, PIRATES*, Stories of Cutlasses, and Corsairs, Buried Treasure and Buccaneers, Ships and Swashbucklers. Selected by Phyllis R. Fenner. Illustrated by Manning DeV. Lee. Franklin Watts, \$2.75.

A boy's spine will tingle at the very words "swashbuckling pirate," "buccaneer," and "freebooter," and from generation to generation have come tales of Blackbeard, Jean Lafitte, Stede Bonnet and others whose exploits have struck terror in the hearts of seafaring men. From these tales Phyllis Fenner presents for lovers of pirate history and fiction a collection of fourteen stories by such authors as Rupert Sargent Holland, Howard Pyle, Merrit P. Allen, Jean Muir, Charles Finger, Armstrong Sperry and others. Mike, the pirate rat, and Augustus (of *Augustus Goes South*) take their places quite naturally with Tom Chist, Cap'n Ezra and the rest.

The striking illustrations in black and white by Manning DeV. Lee are as robust as the stories. *Pirates, Pirates PIRATES* will have a wide appeal for all ages.

F. R.

*The Poetic Parrot.* By Margaret Mackay. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. John Day, \$2.50.

In whimsical doggerel perpetrated by a "poetical" parrot, children are introduced to many interesting members of the zoo. When the parrot escapes from his cage, a satisfactory slap-stick chase results. The action culminates in a hilarious adventure with two thieves in a toy shop. Elementary grade children will chuckle over both story and pictures.

H. M. L.

*Across the Bridge.* By Jerrold Beim. Illustrated by Thomas Maley. Harcourt, Brace and Company, \$2.50.

Ten-year-old Jeff was painfully shy. When his family moved from Newtown across the river to a poor factory town of Watertown, he hoped in his heart that the bridge between would be magic and that on the other side he could play like other boys and have friends like Donnie, his popular brother. The magic, Jeff was to learn, came from himself as he found a place with his own friends of a different background and as he forgot himself in championing the cause of a neighborhood playground. Tassie, Sid, Aunt Martha and Uncle Walt had a part in the magic.

Jerrold Beim's treatment of a social problem is handled sympathetically in *Across the Bridge*, and he will be forgiven if the events in the story happened a little too fast to be thoroughly convincing. The illustrations by Thomas Maley are disappointing. *Across the Bridge* is recommended for youngsters eight to twelve.

F. R.

*Remo Buffano's Book of Puppetry.* Edited and compiled by Arthur Richmond. Illustrated by drawings by Remo Buffano. Macmillan, \$3.00.

Beginning with puppetry as used in religious ceremonies and following it through its Euro-

pean development and emigration to America we are given a brief history of this art. Then follow clear directions and patterns for making puppets and puppet theatres. Marionettes and theatres are treated in the same way. To one who knows nothing about such things the processes seem simply presented, with no pitfalls for the novice.

Advice and basic rules for producing original plays introduces four plays adapted for this type of drama. The material in this book is intended to meet the needs of puppet enthusiasts. Buffano's books are now out of print and this authority's material is made available again through this title.

A. F. C.

*Strange Sea Life.* By Gladys Vondy Robertson and Vera Graham. Illustrated by Michael Bevans. Holt, \$2.50.

A beautiful, fascinating book written particularly for children eight to twelve to answer their questions about what goes on at the bottom of the sea. It explains clearly and simply what kinds of fishes live there, what they look like, how they eat, breathe and sleep; there are also chapters on sponges, corals, and sea anemones as well as on the humpback whale and the salt water crocodile; and, there are fifty six excellent black and white drawings for illustration. A treasure.

L. T. S.

*The Little Red Horse.* By Ruth Sawyer. Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum. Viking Press, \$2.50.

Michael was terrified of the ocean, and his vacation on the Florida coastal island held no attraction for him. Then he met Granny, who taught him the names of the shells on the beach, the mailboat captain, who made him second mate, the lighthouse keeper who started an aquarium for him with the clowning sea horses. And best of all, there was the little red horse, so dear to Granny, who said with his eyes that he had waited for Michael to come. The little red horse shared Michael's adventures and dreams and taught him many things which the grown-ups would never have thought of.



Ruth Sawyer's perfect blendings of reality and fantasy result in an exceptionally fine story for children eight to twelve to read for themselves, and for reading aloud to even younger children, for Michael was only seven. Jay Hyde Barnum's colored illustrations are excellent, while some of the black and white ones are fuzzy.

F. R.

*Yo Ho for Strawberry Roan!* By Byrona Myers.

Drawings by Anne Marie Jauss. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

Further adventures of Squirrel and Golly. They go sliding in the winter, have a boat in the summer, and are captured by an eagle.

J. G. S.

*Mr. Pudgins*, by Ruth Christoffer Carlsen. Pictures by Margaret Bradfield. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.00.

Whenever Mr. Pudgins came to baby-sit with John, Janey, and Pete very queer things happened of which the grown-ups were unaware. Like the day the three children came out of the mirror to play, and the time when all of the faucets in the house ran different kinds of pop instead of water. A very amusing story that will make a good read-aloud book.

K. H.

*Sam Patch, The High, Wide and Handsome Jumper*, by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy. Illustrated by Paul Brown. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.00.

A tall tale about Sam Patch, a natural born jumper, who joined a circus in order to out-jump Hurricane Harry, the Kaskasia Snapping Turtle. The rivalry was finally to be decided by a broad jump, the winner to gain possession of Chucklebait, the bear. Sam rescued Harry as he was about to drop on the rocks of the chasm. A reformed Harry continued with the circus, Sam renamed Chucklebait Old Hickory and returned home to New Jersey. Illustrated in color or in black and white on each page.

K. H.

*Ann of Bethany*. By Georgiana Dorcas Cedar.

Illustrated by Helen Torrey. Abingdon-Cokesbury, \$2.00.

A quiet little story of the time of the Nativity. It centers around a family where a son has been born and ends with the saving of the baby at the time of the flight into Egypt.

J. G. S.

*You and Democracy*. By Dorothy Gordon Dutton, 1951. \$2.00.

In this book the delightful line drawings, with touches of vivid color by Louis Fisher and Karl Murr would convey the meaning, almost, without the text. Because of their story-telling quality many children will pore over these pictures after the expository material has been read to them.

Boys and girls who can read the book for themselves will find it a stimulating source of discussion as to their own rights and responsibilities as American citizens.

In the first few pages the value of differences in people is set forth in many ways. All the boys in a given group have the same name, the reader finds, "Johnny, Giovanni, Hans, Juan, Jan, jean, Ansel. They're all the same. The name is Johnny in different languages. Some trace their families back to the early pioneers. The grandparents of others came from Italy, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Holland, Puerto Rico."

Later he reads, "Each one of those boys has the same rights granted in a democracy. One of them may be President some day. Which one? Anyone of them will have the opportunity, if born in the United States. The important thing is that each one can decide what he wants to be. He can choose his own profession or occupation. Out of that group may come a political leader, a doctor, a policeman, a postman, storekeeper, banker, publisher, fireman, scientist. Whatever the occupation or profession may be, he can choose to have it or change to another if he so desires."

Live youngsters in an upper elementary classroom will debate the generalizations. But

the point is that they will be lead to discuss, to challenge, to affirm. The impact of the book is one of excitement.

Miss Gordon is Moderator of Youth Forums for the *New York Times*. "I hope," she says of her book, "it will succeed in arousing the interest of many children, to give them abiding faith and fervor for democracy." E. G.

*Plantino: The Pride of the Plain*. A ballad of the Old West. Illustrated by Dick Jones. Harcourt Brace, \$1.50.

A bit of New Mexican folk lore in ballad form relating how the narrator was chosen by the sheriff to take word of an impending Indian attack to the fort. Riding his mustang, Plantino, the boy outrode the Indians and saved the day. Small boys who like Indians and horses will like Plantino. K. H.

*Miss B's First Cook Book*. By Peggy Hoffman. Illustrated by photographs by Gerald Hunter. Bobbs-Merrill, \$1.75.

Containing twenty family-sized recipes, tested by Home Economics authorities, and presented in a simple way that practically insures success, this child's cook book looks most interesting to the eye. It has a busy air. The author says she has avoided the use of sharp knives and tools, and has included processes that are fun such as sifting, beating and mixing with the hands. Recipes go from cocoa to cookies and cake, and many of them can be made when the kitchen is not in use for a meal. Directions include mother to light the stove and regulate the heat.

This publication is aimed at the feminine cook directly. Most of the photographs show a little girl about seven or eight years old doing the cooking, against marginal backgrounds of drawings such as kindergarteners make. The average little girl will love the book immediately, and want to start on the first recipe as soon as possible. A. F. C.

### For Younger Children

*Animal Folk Songs for Children*. By Ruth Crawford Seeger. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, \$2.50.

The many enthusiastic readers and singers of Mrs. Seeger's *American Folk Songs for Children* will welcome her newest contribution to music for children. In *Animal Folk Songs for Children* she has collected 43 songs, which, because they are folk songs, are ageless and timeless. The selection is a wide one; there are lusty songs and quiet ones, silly songs and sober ones, bragging songs and modest ones. Like folk songs in general, these concerned about animals contain many elements that make them suitable for children. One factor is a good deal of repetition like:

The old hen she cackled, she cackled in the loft,

The next time she cackled, she cackled in the trough.

The frequently surprise ending adds to their appeal;

The old hen she cackled, she cackled in the lot,

The next time she cackled she cackled in the pot.

The use of rhythmic nonsense words is still another device which endears folk songs to children. "There Was An Old Frog" begins thusly:

There was an old frog and he lived in the spring

Ching-a chang-a polly mitch-a cow-me-o,

He was so hoarse he couldn't sing,

Ching-a chang-a polly mitch-a cow-me-o.

Mrs. Seegers includes suggestions for using the songs in her introduction. These suggestions grow out of her experience as folk song expert and are geared to increasing enjoyment of the songs. Thus she warns against freezing a folk-song in a standard version and encourages instead the learning of different versions. She also has suggestions for the singing and playing of folk songs.

Clear-cut black and white drawings done with expressive detail add a great deal to the book. C. B. S.

"Gabbit", *The Magic Rabbit*. Written and illustrated by Carroll Colby. Coward-McCann, \$1.50.

Gabbit was the small rabbit the magician always pulled out of the old black hat. Gabbit decided one day to surprise the magician, so instead of Gabbit the magician pulled out a cat, a pair of mittens, a coonskin cap, and a Teddy Bear. Gabbit and the magician soon became famous and always let the children in free just to hear them laugh. Paper binding. Picture book. K. H.

*I Can Fly*. A Little Golden Book. By Ruth Krauss. Illustrated by Mary Blair. Simon and Schuster.

This is an imaginative story, told in the first person, and written for the very young listener. It is all about the fun of pretending "I'm anything that's anything". E. A. M.

*The Firehouse Mystery*. By Mary Adrian. Illustrated by Anne Vaughan. Houghton Mifflin, \$2.00.

Mystery stories simple enough for third graders are hard to come by, yet eight and nine year olds are often as fond of mystery as older boys and girls. *The Firehouse Mystery* is not too involved for younger readers, is not too unpalatable for that age level, and is exciting enough to hold them to the very end. Briefly, it tells the tale of how a nine-year old boy helps solve the mystery of a museum fire and frees his grandfather from suspicion. As one eight-year old wrote about it, "The reason I liked this book is that it was so mysterious and ended out good."

It is unfortunate, however, that despite the great advance made in the area of intercultural education of recent years, *The Firehouse Mystery* should feature as the two criminals in the story men of Italian nationality who are made to conform to a stereotype. Where this book is used in classrooms, teachers should take care to see that the stereotype is exposed in their discussion of the story with children. C. B. S.

*Indigo Hill*. By Eleanor Frances Lattimore. Morrow, \$2.00.

*Indigo Hill* is a charmingly written story about Lydia, an eight year old, and her two brothers who live with Aunt Tobey on Indigo Hill. Lydia's adventures are simple enough—keeping brothers out of mischief, chasing a neighbor's goat who like flowers, falling in the mud—except for one hair-raising adventure when the fields catch fire and Aunt Tobey's house barely escapes. However, Miss Lattimore's newest book like her well-known *Little Pear* and others does not rely upon excitement for its charm but on attention to detail, everyday humor and life-like characters.

The illustrations show the children on Indigo Hill to be negro. No mention of their color is made in the text; there is no need to, for the characters are so real that all children regardless of color can identify with them.

C. B. S.

*Pets For Peter*. A Little Golden Book. By Jane Werner. Illustrated by Aurelius Battaglia. Simon and Schuster.

Peter's father decides one day that it is time for him to have a pet. Peter goes in search of a satisfactory animal for a pet, and tries many including an elephant, a polar bear, and a peacock. A good book for the pre-school child. E. A. M.

*Baby's House*. By Miryam. Pictures by Tibor Gergely.

*The Happy Man and His Dump Truck*. By Gelolo McHugh. Pictures by Mary Blair. Little Golden Books. Simon and Schuster.

Three and four year olds will enjoy the trip through *Baby's House* which is full of familiar objects splashed with bright colors.

Three to six year olds will smile at the happy man who tips the dumper when he meets a friend and who gives the farm animals a ride.

W. A. J.

*The Flowered Donkey*. By Margaret Mackey. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. John Day, \$2.25.

One of the jolliest stories to make its ap-

pearance recently is *The Flowered Donkey*, by Margaret Hackey, illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Two engaging Chinese children, ten-year-old Little Flower and baby brother Little Treasure, were very fond of the unique spotted donkey, which neighbors politely named "flowered donkey." He was a favorite in their barnyard with all his vim and stubbornness and his proud Hee-haw! Hee-haw! with which he waked up all the donkeys in the neighborhood.

What happens when Little Flower and Little Treasure ride him to town on an errand makes a rollicking tale, and the Kurt Wiese illustrations almost "steal the show."

F. R.

*Swimming Hole*. By Jerrold Beim. Illustrated by Louis Darling. Morrow, \$2.00.

Larry and his friends went to the swimming hole every day and had a good time until Steve moved into the neighborhood. Steve did not like Larry's color. He stayed on the bank rather than swim in the same pool with Larry. Steve got very much sunburned and next day when all the boys arrived at the pool, Steve found he, too, was a special color and the boys had a good laugh at him. They worked it all out in friendly fashion. This easy book can be enjoyed by very young readers or by older, slower readers. It will serve as a springboard for healthy discussion.

E. G.

*Little Galoshes*. A Little Golden Book. By Kathryn and Byron Jackson. Illustrated by J. P. Miller. Simon and Schuster.

When Little Galoshes went out to play with the animals on his farm, he always put on his little galoshes. One morning when he forgot them, the reaction of his animal friends was such that he would not forget them, again. A good story for nursery school and kindergarten listening.

E. A. M.

*Once There Was a Kitten*. Story and Pictures by Janet Konkle.

*Fluffy and Buffy*. By Alene Dalton. Illustrated by Mary Gehr. Children's Press, \$1.00. Reinforced, \$2.00.

Little Kitten couldn't do everything her mistress Jill did but her mother was proud of her for trying.

Fluffy and Buffy were in for some big surprises when they tried to find the nicest present in all the world for their mother. They found it where they least expected.

Children three to six will enjoy these easy-to-follow stories. The rugged construction of the reinforced edition assures a longer than usual life for these books.

W. A. J.

*Randy and the Queen of Sheba*. By Margaret S. Johnson. Morrow, \$2.00.

Sheba was a big St. Bernard and Randy was a little Sheltie. Randy was afraid of Sheba and so he bristled and barked whenever she came near him in the dog-training class. When the big dog came to live on the farm with him, however, Randy soon learned that she was just eager to make friends. While three times his size, she was only an overgrown puppy, like himself.

This little book is set in very large type and has value from that point of view for the first and second graders, who are emerging into independent reading. Such type and such simple text also have value for the older child who is slow in learning to read. The story and the excellent drawings of the dogs in action will interest both groups of readers.

E. G.

*Railroad Cowboy*. By Catherine Woolley. Illustrated by Iris Beatty Johnson. Morrow, \$2.00.

Third grade David was an enthusiast about railroads of any kind, model or real, and about anything connected with railroading. Under the guidance of a grown up Rail Fan the boys in his gang formed a club and took two exciting train rides on which they traveled by steam train and elevated, visited a roundhouse, climbed into a diesel cab, and watched freight cars being sorted. Knowledge gained here helped David to know what to do when he found a rail loosened, and the signals not working. Quick action saved an accident. David's



reward from the railroad was a check for one hundred dollars and a ride in the cab of a locomotive, professionally attired in striped overalls and visored cap. This was the best thing that had ever happened to David, and made him a hero to the other members of the club.

Eight or nine year old boys interested in trains will probably find this good reading. There is little real excitement in the incidents but it will be a good book to add to a library collection. The title is attractive, the reading not too hard, and it looks like the kind of book children want to be seen reading. A. F. C.

*Color Kittens.* A Little Golden Book. By Margaret Wise Brown. Illustrated by Alice and Martin Provensen. Simon and Schuster.

The two color kittens, Brush and Hush, have all the colors in the world in their buckets except green. In their efforts to make green, they discover many combinations which make new colors. This is a charming book and will provoke the nursery school child's interest in the fun of mixing paints. E. A. M.

*Little Wiener.* By Sally Scott. Illustrations by Beth Krush. Harcourt, \$1.75.

This is an easy picture book story in which three dogs adventure at large. Little Wiener is a nondescript whose make-up lends itself to a cartoon picturing. The illustrations are, mainly, of the comic-joke variety and the text is equally weak. Picture book-reader. F. E. W.

*The Long and the Short of It.* By Cathleen Schurr. Illustrations by Dorothy Maas. Vanguard Press, \$1.50.

The old theme of "do as you would be done by" is presented pictorially in this rather fragile stylization. Pink and black and white illustrations are reminiscent of an antique shop, but both pictures and text fall short of picture book standards. F. E. W.

*Favorite Fairy Tales.* Illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky. *Mouse's House.* By Kathryn and Byron Jackson. Pictures by Richard

Scarry. *Walt Disney Treasure Chest.* Illustrated by the Disney Studio. Big Golden Book Series. Simon and Schuster, \$1.00 each.

The experimentally minded Simon and Schuster publishing house has produced three new books in their Big Golden Book series, each of which illustrates a new approach to children's literature or capitalizes on an approach previously tried and found to be successful. The first of these, a collection called *Favorite Fairy Tales*, is illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky in the latter's inimitable style. In this collection the technique has been to use a double page spread for each of the fairy tales. Three-quarters of the double page is used for the illustration and then the remaining quarter page contains a shortened version of the fairy tale. For six and seven year olds or even for eights who enjoy reading fairy tales on their own but who are not ready for too many details this particular method of introducing fairy tales will undoubtedly prove to be very successful. Parents too will enjoy reading some of these shorter versions aloud to their children.

*The Mouse's House* utilizes the tactile approach which is always successful with the preschool child. In this book the vivid colors of the materials which are to be touched are particularly appealing. The story itself concerns the trials and tribulations of Frisker and Whisker, two brave little mice who attempt to find a new home for themselves. They have a number of hair-raising adventures but in the course of time succeed not only in establishing the house, but also in producing four little baby mice and presumably everybody lives happily ever after.

Walt Disney's *Treasure Chest* will probably appeal as much to adults as to children. In this collection of Walt Disney stories, such favorites "The Brave Little Tailor," "The Country Cousin," "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," and "The Three Little Pigs" are included. Children who enjoy Walt Disney will like seeing their favorite fairy tale characters appear in the form

of Mickey Mouse and other Disney heroes. A delightful modern fairy tale called "Pedro" tells of the adventures of a baby airplane named Pedro who attempts to carry the mail high above the Andes mountains. Pedro's recklessness in flying the plane almost brings disaster to him, but he turns over a new leaf in time and the mail goes through safely. Pedro receives his just reward in the approbation and praise which his parents and fellow countrymen bestow upon him.

C. B. S.

*Quills.* By Loyd Tireman. Adapted by Evelyn Yrisarri. Illustrated by Ralph Douglass. The University of New Mexico Press, \$1.95.

As an information book on the habits of a porcupine "Quills" is excellent. We learn about Quills' enemies, how he protects himself, where he gets his food; the way he lives in winter. As a story book it does not rate quite so high. This reviewer wondered why the author portrayed a yellow pine as hero in the last story when in all the other stories it is Quills whom we are really made to care about. There are a few fine pieces of story telling here, however, and the author's picture of the part Quills plays in the whole animal and vegetable life of the mesa is good and undeniably authentic. The illustrations add considerably to this book for five-to-nine-year-olds.

E. B.

*The Smallest Boy In The Class.* By Jerrold Beim. Illustrated by Meg Wohlberg. William Morrow, \$2.00.

It is very satisfying to discover a realistic story for young children which does not depend on heroics for excitement. The way in which Tiny, the smallest boy in the class, finds out that he is a big person... through the simple means of giving another child a sandwich and a cookie... makes an absorbing story. Up to this time of self discovery, Tiny had invented wild stories, pushed his way to the head of the line, made the biggest noise, drawn the largest pictures. Even after the incident, Tiny does not change too suddenly or

too completely. Children from four to eight years old feel the drama inherent in Tiny's personality, while parents and teachers know that his progress is as real as life. The large type makes for easy reading, and the appealing pictures help to place *The Smallest Boy In The Class* among the small group of really worthwhile books.

E. B.

*David's Bad Day.* Story and Photographs by Else McKean. Shady Hill Press, \$2.00.

*David's Bad Day* may mark the beginning of a new era in books for young children. Instead of dealing with the pre-school child's toys or his house or his play or his school, the theme of this book is David's feelings. It is the story of how David feels when a new baby arrives, and of how David gets because he does feel left out. However, the author doesn't stop at that point. She goes on to show how David's parents, when they realized his feelings of rejection went to work to build up in their son the sense of being loved and wanted, of being just as important as baby brother. *David's Bad Day* serves a two-fold purpose. It will give reassurance to young children who are dealing with similar feelings of rejection and will help parents and teachers better understand and more intelligently deal with the behavior of children who feel left out.

C. B. S.

*Flags of the United Nations.* Edited by Bertram Gabriel, Jr. Sam'l Grabriel Sons & Co. Pp. 60. \$1.50.

This admirably conceived volume should especially appeal to youngsters, because it combines learning with doing. Each member nation of the UN is represented by a page picture of a typical national scene with space left for its flag to be pasted to that page. The pages may then be colored with crayons or paints. A page is reserved for flags of countries not yet members of the UN and pertinent facts are appended. The colored flags for pasting, printed on gummed stock, are included in a

separate packet. Some of the pictures are more discernibly typical than others, and although a child working alone can learn from them, it is likely that the book's purpose will be best achieved when supplemented by classroom discussion.

L. T. S.

*The Story of Appleby Capple.* By Anne Parrish. Harper, \$2.75.

This is a special kind of an "alphabet story," with a special chapter for each letter of the alphabet, with the names of all the characters in each chapter starting with the same letter. A nonsense book of pure fantasy in which butterflies are striped like zebras, are pursued

by a boy named Appleby Capple, who gets lost hunting for the perfect gift (a Zebra butterfly) for Cousin Clement's ninety-ninth birthday.

B. G. S.

*Boats and How To Draw Them.* By Amy Hogeboom. Vanguard \$1.50.

This book is the seventh in a popular series of pictures-drawing-information books. Nine boats are described, from tugboat to aircraft carrier, pictured with good clear photographs, and instructions for drawing are given. Primary transportation units could use this. Children will pick it up for drawing.

M. S. S.

# EDITORIAL

(Continued from Page 305)

children's classics in inexpensive reprint editions. The Golden Books series, published by Simon and Schuster, have been remarkably successful in reaching a large market with high quality children's books which are extremely colorful and appealing. These series have demonstrated the practicality of undertaking the mass production of good juvenile literature. There should be further experimentation with even lower cost materials, utilizing perhaps the type of paper and color printing

comparable to that employed in the comic books, but with suitable content and with text that is more legible.

Schools can encourage such experimentation by allocating larger sums for the purchase of low-cost quality books, if need be by reducing the number of standardized textbooks and readers, excellent as many of these are, which now require substantial investments of school funds.

John J. DeBoer

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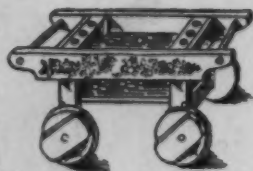


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